

# STRIKE

ART COMMUNICATION EDITION, VOL. 2, No. 2, MAY, 1978



CANADA & U.S....\$50  
FRANCE .....F3  
GERMANY .....DM2  
ITALY .....LIT500  
UNITED KINGDOM 30p

TORTURE  
POST-MARXISM  
RED BRIGADES



# POST-PERFORMANCE PRECEDENTS

("Art performance" is becoming very big now because it's passé — very Canadian.)

This is suicide in several languages:

Se suicider?  
Selbstmörder?  
Suicidarsi?

I came across *Hara-Kiri? eine groteske publication* at a Dada exhibit in Berlin last October.

By 1894 most sympathizers realized that the defiance of the anarchists exceeded defensible bounds, and the outrages died out quickly. But their effects remained. Anarchism served not only to unsettle the political smugness of the Third Republic, but also to challenge any formulated aesthetic. The dynamism of prewar artistic activity ran a close parallel to anarchism; postwar Dada and Surrealism look like its artistic parodies. By acting on their ideas, the anarchist "martyrs" inspired artists to demonstrate as boldly.

Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years*

This is sort of a quicky explanation of anarchism:

Anarchists come from the most varied backgrounds. But a specific mentality links them — the spirit of revolt and its derivatives, the spirit of examination and criticism, of opposition and innovation, which leads to scorn and hate of every commitment and hierarchy in society, and ends up in the exaggeration of individualism. Decadent literature furnished the party with a strong contingent; in recent years there has been, especially among young writers, an upsurge of anarchism.

Maurice Boisson, *Les attentats anarchistes*

But the Dadaists were by no means the first bad boys of twentieth century art. Dada may have "exploded like a well-timed bomb" in Zurich, 1916-17, but the militant art of the Futurists came up snarling in the pages of *Le Figaro* (Paris) on Feb. 20, 1909.

## MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

1. We intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness.

2. Courage, audacity, and revolt will be essential elements of our poetry.

3. ... We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and slap.

4. We affirm that the World's magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed...

...

7. Except in struggle, there is no more beauty. No work without an aggressive character can be a masterpiece...

...

9. We will glorify war — the world's only hygiene-militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and scorn for women.

10. We will destroy the museums, libraries, academies

of every kind, will fight moralism, feminism, every opportunistic or utilitarian cowardice...

... So let them come, the gay incendiaries with charred fingers! Here they are! Here they are!

F. T. Marinetti



Arnaldo Ginna  
Ginna and Marinetti engaged in  
Interventionist Flaccuffs,  
frame from the film  
'Vita futurista' 1916

7. Semi-equality of man and woman and a lessening of the disproportion in their social rights.

F. T. Marinetti, *Destruction of Syntax —  
Imagination Without Strings —  
Words-in-Freedom* 1913

(photo caption)

There is another type of hero in the complex Japanese tradition, a man whose career usually belongs to a period of unrest and warfare and represents the synthesis of an ethos of accomplishment. He is the man whose single-minded sincerity will not allow him to make the manoeuvres and compromises that are so often needed for **mundane success**. During the early years his courage and verve may propel him rapidly upwards, but he is wedded to the losing side and will ineluctable be cast down. Flinging himself after his painful destiny, he defies the dictates of convention and common sense, until eventually he is worsted by his enemy, the "successful survivor," who by his ruthlessly realistic politics manages to impose a new, more stable order on the world.

Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure*

You know that we are creating surrounded by the cowardice and despicable apathy of Italian (so called Canadian) artists

Umberto Boccioni, *Futurist Dynamism and French Painting* 1913

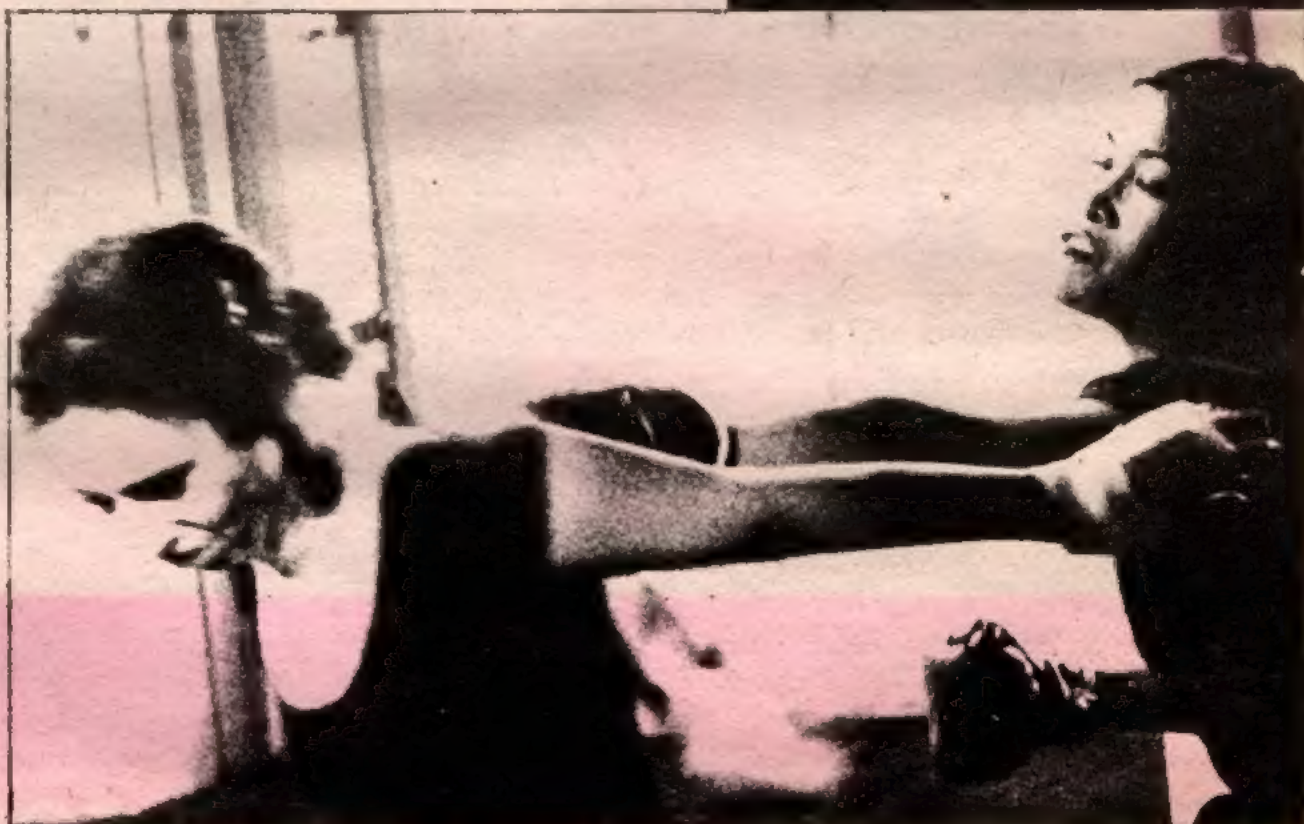


photo: still from "Two Deadly Women" by Peter Dudar, 1978.

américa  
latina,  
"PARLA!!!"

ARTES VISUALES  
revista trimestral bilingüe  
museo de arte moderno  
chapultepec-méxico 5 DF



# Playing Idiots, Plain Hideous

We are opposed to the dominant tendency of playing idiots, as in the case of 'punks' or the sustainers of the commodity system. The questioning through polemics of the cultural, economical and political hegemony should be fought on all fronts.

To still maintain tolerance towards the servants of the State is to

Westand for active ideological struggle because it is the weapon for ensuring unity within the Party and the revolutionary organizations in the interest of our fight. Every Communist and revolutionary should take up this weapon.

But liberalism rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace, thus giving rise to a decadent, philistine attitude and bringing about political degeneration in certain units and individuals in the Party and the revolutionary organizations.

Liberalism manifests itself in various ways.

To let things slide for the sake of peace and friendship when a person has clearly gone wrong, and refrain from principled argument because he is an old acquaintance, a fellow townsman, a schoolmate, a close friend, a loved one, an old colleague or old subordinate. Or to touch on the matter lightly instead of going into it thoroughly, so as to keep on good terms. The result is that both the organization and the individual is harmed. This is one type of liberalism.

To indulge in irresponsible criticism in private instead of actively putting forward one's suggestions to the organization. To say nothing to people to their faces but to gossip behind their backs, or to say nothing at a meeting but to gossip afterwards. To show no regard at all for the principles of collective life but to follow one's own inclination. This is a second type.

To let things drift if they do not affect one personally; to say as little as possible while knowing perfectly well what is wrong, to be worldly wise and play safe and seek only to avoid blame. This is a third type.

Not to obey orders but to give pride of place to one's own opinions. To demand special consideration from the organization but to reject its discipline. This is a fourth type.

To indulge in personal attacks, pick quarrels, vent personal spite or seek revenge instead of entering into an argument and struggling against incorrect views for the sake of unity or progress or getting the work done properly. This is a fifth type.

To hear incorrect views without rebutting them and even to hear counter-revolutionary remarks without reporting them, but instead to take things calmly as if nothing had happened. This is a sixth type.

To be among the masses and fail to conduct propaganda and agitation or speak at meetings or conduct investigations and inquiries among them, and instead to be indifferent to them and show no concern for their well-being, forgetting that one is a Communist and behaving as if one were an ordinary non-Communist. This is a seventh type.

To see someone harming the interests of the masses and yet not feel indignant, or dissuade or stop him or reason with him, but to allow him to continue. This is an eighth type.

To work half-heartedly without a definite plan or direction; to work perfunctorily and muddle along — "So long as one remains a monk, one goes on tolling the bell." This is a ninth type.

preserve the status quo of Liberalism. In the manner of the Brigades, we support leg shooting/knee capping to accelerate the demise of the old system. Despite what the 'new philosophers' tell us about the end of ideology, the war is before and beneath us. Waged and unwaged sector of the population is increasing its demands for 'less work'. On the way to surpass Liberalism we should prepare the barricades.

To regard oneself as having rendered a great service to the revolution, to pride oneself on being a veteran, to disdain minor assignments while being quite unequal to major tasks, to be slipshod in work and slack in study. This is a tenth type.

To be aware of one's own mistakes and yet make no attempt to correct them, taking a liberal attitude towards oneself. This is an eleventh type.

They are all manifestations of liberalism.

We could name more. But these eleven are the principle types.

They are all manifestations of liberalism.

Liberalism is extremely harmful in a revolutionary collective. It is a corrosive which eats away unity, undermines cohesion, causes apathy and creates dissension. It robs the revolutionary ranks of compact organization and strict discipline, prevents policies from being carried through and alienates the Party organizations from the masses which the Party leads. It is an extremely bad tendency.

Liberalism stems from petty bourgeois selfishness, it places personal interests first and the interests of the revolution second, and this gives rise to ideological, political, and organizational liberalism.

People who are liberals look upon the principles of Marxism as abstract dogma. They approve of Marxism, but are not prepared to practice it in full; they are not prepared to replace their liberalism by Marxism. These people have their Marxism, but they have their liberalism as well — they talk Marxism but practice liberalism; they apply Marxism to others but liberalism to themselves. They keep both kinds of goods in stock and find a use for each. This is how the minds of certain people work.

Liberalism is a manifestation of opportunism and conflicts fundamentally with Marxism. It is negative and objectively has the effect of helping the enemy; that is why the enemy welcomes its preservation in our midst. Such being its nature, there should be no place for it in the ranks of the revolution.

We must use Marxism, which is positive in spirit, to overcome liberalism, which is negative. A Communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all incorrect ideas and actions, so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual, and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist.

All loyal, honest, active, and upright Communists must unite to oppose the liberal tendencies shown by certain people among us, and set them on the right path. This is one of the tasks on our ideological front.

Mao Tse Tung, 1937





# Publications

## Gay Left

A Socialist Journal by Gay People  
27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1, England

The relevance of journals like **Gay Left** lies in the fact that the Marxist ideology is explored outside the outworn entrenchment of the official communist/socialist parties, which generally at this stage, have not taken any steps to update their struggle in light of the major social changes in the twentieth century. What should be criticized is the orthodox parties' conservatism of values and principles maintained by the party lines, whether that is in the Soviet Union or Euro-communism. Often counter-revolutionary attitudes, such as in relation to the 'preservation' of the bourgeois family or the bourgeois culture and state control, not worker-controlled means of production, are typical and damaging to the cause of social change. **Gay Left** takes a clear revolutionary stand on the reformation of the family and the necessity for a social base that would allow for a new society to form. Official parties are not in favour of questioning the bourgeois phallographic family. Ironically, a major work by Engels on the origin of the family, **The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State**, condemns the bourgeois individualized family structure that the Soviets now so dearly defend. Even Engels, however, never departs from the Darwinian determinism and the supremacy of the male ideological framework, typical of pre-sexual liberation times. Orthodox parties denounce activities such as the gay left as irrelevant to the class struggle. Meanwhile, no analysis is made between sexual repression and the work ethic; even Gramsci was able to perceive this in his study of the spying techniques employed by Ford over its employees' conduct in private! Sexism is indeed the first step toward the division of labour, and not until this problem is solved can we speak of overcoming capitalism. **Gay Left** is one of the few attempts being made to converge the oppression of a patriarchal society and capitalism into a single class struggle. In its quasi-heroic approach, it reminds one of the earlier efforts of other gay papers, and we realize that after all, not much social change has been achieved.

## Red Bologna

Max Jaggi, Roger Muller, and Sil Schmid  
233a Kentish Town Rd., London NW5, England

As a reference book on the past work of the commun-

ist run administration in the city of Bologna, written a couple of years ago, **before** the students' riot of 1977, **Red Bologna** is a remarkable document. The impressions of three foreigners over a relatively well-run city, and the interviews with some of the major political and cultural administrators of Bologna are the main characteristics of the book. The left government of Bologna has been in power for thirty years, planning the development of co-operatives and greater social benefits for the city inhabitants. Some of the social improvements are worth considering as examples of an enlightened government: such as the free fares on public transportation for working people, their attempt to reorganize the culture and economy of the city under the hostile central government of the Christian Democrats, for which a great deal of conflict and unresolved problems can be accounted for, as the question of academic education or the housing problem. The conflict between Bologna's left government and the right central government in Rome are some of the causes of the recent struggle and terrorist uprising. The book states: 'The communists in Bologna have not solved the crisis of capitalism in one area; nor have they developed a conception of socialism in one city. Rather they have offered a perspective on what is possible to achieve within a determinate social system. They have provided the basis for introducing norms of conduct and public management different from those which have prevailed in Italy over the last thirty years. Most significantly, they have harnessed public energies through an extensive system of democratic participation.'

## Breton/Trotsky

Arturo Schwarz  
union generale d'etions  
8, rue Garanciere, 75006, Paris

No incongruity is found in this little book by Schwarz which is one of the few texts to juxtapose a 'poet and an artist' with a political figure of the stature of Breton and Trotsky. At first sight one might get annoyed by the personality-cult built around the myth of Trotsky and Breton, but the book is enlightening in relation to the notion of revolutionary culture and political theory. Schwarz's interest in Trotsky is sparked by the latter's pronouncement of the necessity to maintain the complete freedom for the artist in content and independence from any political theory. Schwarz's analysis focusses on Trotsky's statements on art as a separate entity to be kept 'independent', and hence to be a condition of 'anarchism'. The thesis is supported by a side attack on Stalinism and the revisionism installed in the Soviet Union with Stalin. Proof of this is taken with the suicide of Mayakovsky, interpreted by Schwarz, following Trotsky, as an act of rebellion

against the reinforcement of an art dictated by the party. The brief analysis of Mayakovsky's death is important in relation to the historical revolutionary upheaval of the Russian revolution and the subsequent bureaucratization of the Soviet life.

The overall thesis stands on the anarchic belief in cultural independence. It is rather a manifestation of bourgeois reaction to understand history and culture in such a heroified framework, as Schwarz does. Trotsky's statement: 'toute licence en art, sauf contre la révolution prolétarienne' should be carefully weighed against the pressure to justify a grand theory of anarchism that would allow for an unspecific independence of art. It should not be forgotten that the relationship between work processes results with culture as its outcome rather than as an independent enterprise.

## Gundrisse

Karl Marx  
Vintage Books

A lesser known book by Marx, and yet his major unfinished work. The English translation is quite recent and will prove useful for the Marxian student. It is sad to know how much hostility and preconception exists in the West against works such as **Gundrisse**, which instead should be a mandatory analytical work for students to understand the mechanics of Capital and Labour. The reading of such a mammoth work is relatively easy and instructive on a historical point of view. Marx considered this work to be the scientific elaboration of his theoretical foundation and it is an endless resource for understanding his method of enquiry to throw off the capitalist preconceptions on the social structure. In particular, his analysis of the relationship between production and consumption and the manipulation exercised by capitalism to curtail the buying power of one's own workers and to expand instead the consumerism of other workers. 'Production (thus) produces not only the object but also the manner of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively. Production thus creates the consumer. Production thus not only creates an object for the subject, but also for a subject for the object.'

Another quote will suffice to illustrate the timely re-discovery of Marx's perception. **The Times** of November 1857 contains an utterly delightful cry of outrage on the part of a West Indian plantation owner. This advocate analyses with great moral indignation — as a plea for the reintroduction of Negro slavery — how the Quashees (the free blacks of Jamaica) content themselves with producing what is only strictly necessary for their own consumption, and, alongside this 'use value', regard loafing (indulgence and idleness) as the real luxury good; how they do not care a damn for the sugar and the fixed capital invested in the plantations, but rather observe the planters' impending bankruptcy with an ironic grin of malicious pleasure...They have ceased to be slaves, but not in order to become wage labourers, but instead, self-sustaining peasants working for their own consumption.' (Notebook III)

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**STRIKE**  
15 Duncan Street  
Toronto, Canada M5H 3H1

**STRIKE** (an Art Communication Edition)  
published by Supervision Publications  
distributed in North America and Europe

Subscriptions:  
Single copies are 50 cents  
Yearly subscription is \$ 7.00 for 8 issues.

Vol. 2, No 2  
May, 1978, Toronto, Canada  
Second Class Mail paid in Toronto  
Permit number 4113

Art Communication Edition is supported in  
part by the Ontario Arts Council

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## CONTENTS

POST-PERFORMANCE PRECEDENTS	2
by Peter Dudar	
RED BRIGADES ON TRIAL	6
(Excerpt from the Turin Trial)	
LES MAITRES PENSEURS	8
by Amerigo Marras	
EL INFIERNO	10
courtesy of Amnesty International	
THE MYTH OF THE ARTIST AS REBEL AND HERO	14
by Kenneth Coutts-Smith	
VENICE BIENNALE (SPECIAL INSERT.)	17
by the Central STRIKE Committee	
UNION SECURITY NOW	23
by Paul McLellan	
TRANSCRIPTION & ANNOTATIONS	24
by Alan Sondheim	
TOWARDS A TRADITIONAL PRACTICE	28
by Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson	
THE GROUP/THE PROLETARIAT/ POLITICAL RADICALISM	30
by Tony Rickaby	

STRIKE DISSEMINATES A CRITICAL  
PRACTICE BASED UPON THE NEW  
IDEOLOGY. THE DIRECTING GROUP  
IS ALLIED TO THE REVOLUTIO-  
NARY CAUSE THAT INTENDS TO  
CREATE CULTURAL POLEMICS, DE-  
BATES, CONFRONTATIONS AND THE  
PURSUIT OF COLLECTIVE EDUCA-  
TION FOR A NEW COMMUNITY ELI-  
MINATING LABOUR.





# Red Brigades On Trial

*extracts from the trial of the Red Brigade in Turin:*

**Semeria:** I'm speaking for myself. We have to thank first of all the imperialist bourgeoisie which on these occasions have shown us with extreme clarity what jails and courtrooms are. Lying about Moro's treatment in the people's jail, they told us what they never told us before. For instance, what is solitary confinement? Your complaint about jail isolation is referred to Moro and no ours...media has been telling us that solitary confinement worsens the body condition of the ones in jail. Again speaking about Moro's condition, they tell us there has been some physical pressures. Now the kinds of physical pressures exercised on Moro are exactly the same as the ones exercised on thousands of proletariat people jailed for years. A large number of them cannot be here in the trial room. But in our collective memory we know of many. We are not going to forget even one political prisoner. Nothing will remain unpunished. Now we are going to explain what this trial is for us. This trial is only one instance between classes and it is the expression of the power relationship that exists between classes in a particular moment. At this moment the trial is the method and the form with which we are confronting one another in a political sense with your own class. It is not an act of vindictiveness, it is not an act of justice, as you say instead. It is war action against a class. Therefore, both the trial as well as the imprisonment need not eliminate individuality: you are apprehended for Moro because of your practice carried out for centuries.

**Ferrari:** We are fighting for the political imprisonment.

**Basone:** For us detention and the trial are war actions. The accused is not us, but you.

**Judge:** All of this has nothing to do with anything.

**Franceschini:** The most repulsive hypocrites are revisionists. They are the last ones to come in and put their hands on the cake. The revisionists are the most power hungry. Look also at the pathetic lawyers here.

**Judge:** No one is using these adjectives against you, so please maintain a reciprocal respect.

**Curcio:** You should accuse a Trotskist.

**Judge:** How are these declarations relative to the trial?

**Bonavita:** They are related to it through our recognition of the political identity of the prisoners. Aldo Moro is not repressed as an individual, but as the leader of the DC (Christian Democrats) and as being the one responsible for the last thirty years of what is now happening in Italy. Keep well in mind that your instruments do not bend us. Because even in the special jails or in confinement we will organize ourselves. And we will also organize all of those that you call common criminals.

**Curcio:** The media says that some prisoners from the IRA have been treated chemically by the system. You are the ones who know about the chemical manipulation of prisoners. You are the ones who know about all the violence perpetrated on prisoners in the special jails. "L'Asinara" is a monument to political torture. You are the ones to have used violence, the chemical treatment, the solitary confinement. And now you complain that one of your class is in a people's jail. We can assure you that this representative from your class, for which we cannot recognize individual dignity, is not treated with your methods. There is similarity between the violence that the State uses in countries like the Netherlands, Switzerland...

**Judge:** They are all red herrings.

**Curcio:** It is not true. These are appropriate arguments because they refer to imprisonment under which we find ourselves. We should tell everyone that people's prisoners, from Amerio to the fascist Labate to Moro, have never received any form of

violence from the proletariat. They have simply been questioned on their political responsibilities. If they have given wider declarations, we are not concerned. These declarations are not, however, the outcome of any violence.

**Defense:** Your honour, can they answer the questions of the trial.

**Curcio:** I have nothing to answer.

**Defense:** You are the accused.

**Curcio:** No, you are the accused.

**Defense:** It is not possible to carry out a trial like this. I am not afraid. I am saying that you are the accused one and that you have to answer in this role. I am protesting about the legality of this debate. I do not want to hear political speeches. I am requesting the expulsion of the accused.

**Judge:** If you wish to stay in the court room, you cannot start a polemic with anyone.

**Paroli:** This is a political process. When the socialist party decides to send a representative from the government, when the media has made a defamatory campaign in their reports...

**Judge:** We have to judge the facts.

**Paroli:** The regime that you represent is also pertaining to this process.

**Judge:** We do not represent anyone. We are not the secular reinforcement for anyone. You should be made aware of this.

**Paroli:** This is a class confrontation and the ones who are disagreeing with us are the ones that depict us as the enemies of the working class: the Unions and the PCI (Italian Communist Party). Here in this court room there is everybody except the syndicalists; anti-terrorists, lawyers, popular judges... Agnelli (the industrialist from FIAT) is here represented through the lawyer Chiusano. Agnelli who steals to increase his power...

**Defense:** Agnelli has nothing to do with this. I am not defending Agnelli, and he is not our master.

**Franceschini:** What is Chiusano doing here then?

**Defense:** Chiusano is a respectable lawyer and you cannot insult him.

**Franceschini:** Chiusano is a servant of FIAT and you are a servant too.

**Judge:** Overruled.

**Curcio:** Since you accused us of being an armed gang, is this a political process or not?

**Bertolazzi:** You keep saying that whenever we speak, what we say is not pertaining to the trial. You have instead commemorated a dead lawyer. We did not say a word about it. But to us this commemoration means absolutely nothing. We want to speak instead of Ulrike Meinhof and of all other political fellows murdered by you and your pigs.

**Defense:** There are no pigs in here.

**Bertolazzi:** You are one.

**Judge:** Order to have Bertolazzi taken out of the court room.

**Bassi:** At this moment I have no questions to make, but I will reserve the right to interrogate the jury made by servants of the State and the radical Aglietta who together with all those from the Radical party are Cossiga's lackeys.

**Paroli:** The media and the newspapers does not go to interview the mothers of the workers killed on the job. Workers are laid off by the thousands. You belong to a criminal organization.

**Defense:** The accused is attempting to overturn the situation. I cannot remain in my place both as an accused and being intimidated.

**Judge:** Paroli should be taken away from the court room, having a contemptuous attitude towards the court.

**Curcio:** You have imposed four or five defense lawyers on us, who are connected with several parties, and who have to consult with them...

**Franceschini:** Even the syndicalists were supposed to have been sent here. How can this not be political? Why is everyone behaving this way? Because the PCI wants to become more State than the State, more police than the police.

**Judge:** All these considerations are yours and we will let you make them...

**Franceschini:** This is a political issue and I do not believe that you are of so little intelligence not to understand that the whole thing is part of a mechanism of which you yourself are also a little gear. Because at this point it would mean that you are frighteningly naive. Otherwise you do not have any brains. You are saying to us: I have absolutely nothing against you personally. But you take part in a function. We cannot understand how there can be such schizophrenia between your brains and your balls. If you accept certain laws, if you behave in a particular way, it is a sign that you agree with this. The law is a particular regulating device in the class confrontation. What is happening today? the world is divided into two classes: one is ours the other is your class. If such truth would be admitted things would be much clearer. What happens instead is that you are hiding the truth and because of this you are forced to invent abstract categories. In the end you will even believe your own abstractions. Even you end up believing you are above the political dispute. Lawyers and their swords on the defensive think they are the heroes. The truth is that you are afraid of us as a class. This is a political process. Why don't you admit it?

**Judge:** But have you asked yourself why we are listening to you?

**Franceschini:** We want to see that you are not even listening. We have enough support for our position in the country that demonstrates that this is a political trial. Following your logic the most special trial you can offer is a democratic one. We cry over our dead ones. We have never attempted to pick on people's minds with insidious hypocrisies. We commemorate our dead with a front. Among your dead there are five special policemen. They died not because it was 'them' but because they had chosen that role. If five workers would have died you would not have cried for them. If yours would have been our dead, do you know what would have happened? We would have seen that little shrimp Leone (Italy's President) on television distributing medals...

**Defense:** It is intolerable.

**Franceschini:** What can I do if he is a little shrimp?

**Ferrari:** He is also a big opportunist.

**Defense:** I demand his expulsion. (Ferrari is expelled.)

**Franceschini:** This is an orgy of hypocrisies. These jails have not been inherited from fascism, they have been invented by your democracy. None of us have any haste for this trial...We could not give a damn about them. But the fact is they play a role in a very precise function. They may pretend not to notice their role, but they are playing a role. If tomorrow we are going to question them, they cannot act surprised. I am saying to you, the defense lawyer, I have nothing against you personally, but I am referring to your lawyer's gown. If I shoot your gown, and inside there is a man, I am sorry, but there is nothing that I can do. The conclusion is that here no one is innocent. Even Aglietta (the defense lawyer) is not here by chance, but has been consciously selected for this function. Tomorrow do not come and cry over your dead. Don't just stand there crying and complaining. Pick up your guns and accept the confrontation.





**“CARRY OUT THE STRIKE  
AGAINST THE IMPERIALIST STATE OF  
THE TRANS—NATIONALS”  
“BUILD THE UNITY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY  
MOVEMENT”  
(Red Brigades)**





# Les Maitres Penseurs

Amerigo Marras

Among the prominent exponents of the French 'New Philosophy', Andre Glucksmann emerges as one of the 'authorities' of the movement with his book 'Les Maitres Penseurs'. The book is an outright attack on ideology and its effects. He questions, as a point of departure, the reason for revolt. Both revolt and ideology require large audiences obeying the dictum of the Modern Prince, who hypothetically defines for others the notion of freedom. The argument against ideology is a carefully woven reasoning, endlessly shifting between levels of thoughts, from meta-physics to philosophy. Considering the process of radicalization of the masses, Glucksmann believes revolution to be following one of the alternatives between: a) radical form, intimated in the present for a government of the future, eradicating all past history; b) an all permitting revolution eradicating all evils; c) a collectivization found in togetherness, which amounts to the subjugation of the majority by the few (if one says 'drink,' everyone else drinks), as imperative intolerance.

We read the pretextual 'spirit of serving the people', as explified by China, as the individual leader's notion of 'serving the people'. The '800 million Chinese people' are, in effect 'Mao's 800 million Chinese people'. What is accredited to a revolutionary structure, is nothing but a dictatorship, where differences exist between the individuals giving orders and the ones receiving them through the institution of **government**. Conventional Marxist atheism condemns theology, the orthodoxy of such a belief makes atheism into another theology. Here is a paradox. Typically in radicalization, freedom is set as the ultimate achievement for the revolution, meanwhile **freedom** is achieved always through **work**. Here is another paradox of ideology. Glucksmann questions the price that has to be paid in bloodshed in order to achieve freedom, equality, and brotherhood. Working to the root of the ideological evil, he maintains that revolutions are only the tip of an iceberg. Beneath the iceberg is the presence of **the text**, which supports the dictatorship which, in turn, uses **the text** to dominate people.

To prove this point he refers to the well known Nazi phenomenon, which used **the text** (Mein Kampf) as a marriage between the national and revolutionary ideologies. The results are known. Indeed typical of all dictatorships (equated with all revolutions) is the construction of an historical frame of reference. For example, Hitler, aware of the German desire to realize

socialism and a revolutionary change, distorted Wagnerian nationalism and Nietzsche's ideology for the realization of a national revolutionary ideology: Nazism. **The text** is supposed to be a seminal device for the identification of territorial unity, necessary in the actualization of the ideology first, and then of the revolution. Germany, France, and England are territories in so far as each of them represents an ideological entity, a territory marked by **the text**. When one speaks of some national characteristics, in fact, one is actually speaking of the ethical boundaries limiting people within a particular territory. Buttressed by the military, areas limiting people within a particular people within a particular territory. Buttressed by the military, Glucksmann says, ideology (**the text**) roots itself first and later becomes (theologically) metaphysical. Within the boundaries of a territory, **the text** makes the law and subsequently through its own reinforcement it becomes power itself. 'The French law is the wish of the French people' is nothing but the law of the few against the rest of the population. The question raised here by Glucksmann is more important than he himself meant in the context of the logical construct of his argument (against ideologies). The question refers to the discrepancy between the conceptualized notion of a 'social group' and the actual interrelationship and existing hierarchy of a 'social group'.

The question raised is the discrepancy between the two levels of logic with the problem of the fluctuating definition/meaning of 'society'. He partially fills the gap by considering, for example, the Jewish identity to be a real social group, as opposed to the positical territory sustained by revolutionary ideologies. The Jewish identity is here used as an example of a social group victimized by ideology. However we have no counterbalance of accounts on the victimization of (the same or other) groups by the pure theological hegemony of Judeo-Christianity, for example. The Bible, **the text** par excellence, is nowhere mentioned in this philosophical treatise, as being a major contributing force to the victimization and colonization of entire populations. The figures of human lives lost in religious bloodshed is in any case far greater than any other victimizations Glucksmann takes into his analysis. The Jewish identity is taken at face value, its beliefs left unquestioned. Glucksmann consistently fixes his analysis within the classical historical frame of revolution, as exemplified and dictated by **the French revolution**. It demonstrates the connection between revolution and

text, between text and language, between text and printed medium. He accuses the text of freezing itself historically and not being able to receive further transformations. Innis and McLuhan have spoken of some of the characteristics of the Gutenberg medium; these however are not being re-investigated by Glucksmann. The rules of the law have a tendency to justify themselves, rather than serve the processes of government. They only serve the BUREAUCRATIC MACHINE. No polemics can be drawn by this verification, too much common sense to be disputed. Let's go on.

The major accused in this trial against ideology is Marxism, as equated to Stalinism. That Stalinism has been an iron fist of terror needs not to be excused; however Glucksmann extends this negative judgement to Marx and to all applications of Marxism, as an absolute and not as a self-contradictory statement. Glucksmann finds Marxism to have produced crimes, only. No other 'achievements' are acknowledged as long as a single 'crime' can be accounted for. The argument is preposterous, since no situation could ever guarantee the lack of abuse of power by members of a society. It is also a very unfair exclusion of obvious 'achievements', (a noun that Glucksmann uses with sarcasm) like the fights against illiteracy and economical stagnation in China, Cuba, or Albania. Marxism cannot be held responsible for the crimes of Stalinism; any analogy other than self reference is misleading manipulation. In the same token, we could contradict ourselves, the consideration of the Chinese, Soviet, or Cuban examples are particular circumstances and not general ones out of Marxism. The comparison of Stalinist crimes to the overall Marxist base would be, again analogically speaking, like trying to eliminate childhood because the process of learning how to walk is a painful experience for toddlers. This analogy is drawn in particular reference to ideological education, from which Glucksmann presupposes that a Marxist state equates people with children.

The attack against ideology is attacking the master thinkers par excellence: Fichte, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche. All of whom are male, German, and giants of the nineteenth century philosophy. No sufficient ideological distinction between these philosophers is ever made in the book. They are lumped into a single current of romantic revolutionary tradition. The separate chapters with headings for each philosopher are only formal separations of the same attack against ideology. Another commonality is drawn among the master

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COSTRUIRE L'UNITA' DEL MOVIMENTO RIVOLUZIONARIO  
NEL PARTITO COMBATTENTE

BRIGATE ROSSE



ATTACCARE, COLPIRE, LIQUIDARE E DISPERDERE  
LA DEMOCRAZIA CRISTIANA,  
ASS E PORTANTE DELLA RISTRUTTURAZIONE DELLO  
STATO E DELLA CONTRORIVOLUZIONE IMPERIALISTA.

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Novembre 1977



thinkers: their persistent anti-semitism, showing them as villains that would have supported concentration camps for 'social reasons'. The stronger polarity built into this anti-ideological theory, as the arguments rolls, raises the question on whether Glucksmann wishes to acknowledge the interests his arguments is actually serving. The innocent lamb is the typical Soviet dissident. A sweeping generalization or overly romanticized scenario is represented through the dreaded Goulag. Some comparative comments are reported about the American Youth revolting at home against the Vietnam War, for example, but not nearly as 'dramatic' as the Soviet counterpart. Glucksmann constructs a logic allowing an outside and an inside to the 'ideological' villain. It is puzzling that he does not verify at this point the principle of hegemony on a world scale. If this is not clear, I mean the dependence on the International Economic Market, certainly dominated by capitalist economy through all its brutality. Is Glucksmann simply glossing over the economical balances between advanced capitalist countries (which he seems to ignore the existence of) and the capitalist controlled fascist regimes in South America, Africa, and Asia? No. The only connection between these dictatorships is said to be the occasional existence of an ideology of a text. The investigation however, unfortunately does not go any deeper. Dictatorships rooted in world economy are totally misinterpreted. The only interesting point in this regard is the verification of the principle of contradiction, this not being a virtue, but a condition we are caught in. He says that (after Gödel) even mathematics does not recognize a static viewpoint, compatible with the principle of paradoxes. similar to the Cretan Liar: 'if it is not, it is; if it is, it is not'.

Glucksmann condemned ideology as coming from the intellectual elite, and therefore being bourgeois in origin. Implicitly Glucksmann realizes that the conditions of inequality are set by differences in education, which in turn creates a self-perpetuating orthodoxy rather than a self awareness among the 'masses'. The criticism of Marxism, as formulated by the new philosophers is also bourgeois in origin and makes full reference to the Olympus of philosopher-giants and to the giants of Soviet dissidency. The contradiction of Marxism and of the new philosophy shows, however, the seminal importance of education in the process of self-organization of the people. The elitist education, Mr. Glucksmann does not mention, allows for the persistence of a wage labour, saleable as commodity within liberal economy. He rather questions the revolutionary theory as external to the revolutionary class, and that his class is external to the society that it is trying to revolutionize. The obscure point in this closed circle of theory-class-society-theory is the actual definition of society. Glucksmann does not outline the socio-economic interdependence within a precise historical condition. He only locates the effect from the theory, namely from a written text that by its own nature is a bourgeois static law enforcer, later coinciding with power itself. Secondly, the process of theorization-radicalization-actualization by class differences of a 'revolution' is not as clear cut as Glucksmann wants us to believe. Glucksmann forgets to analyze the different structural organizational conditions within capitalist and non-capitalist economies. Nazism and Marxism, exemplified by Soviet dictatorship, are freely unified by the author without differentiation of mechanics, effects, and of the social reasons that created them in the first place. The Soviet and the German models are the models of his attack. The Soviet model may or may not represent a truly Marxist economy, and in any case it is only an incomplete socialist regime that is by no means the dialectical communist state controlled by the workers. The disdain of ideology is spelled out more clearly when he states that liberal economy is reinforced by its disruptions, such as strikes, riots, protests, and polemics. 'POLEMICS FEED WHAT THEY CONTEST'. He supports his argument by using the examples of the workers' strikes at the turn of the century, which were followed by the scientific organization of work; and anarcho-syndicalism was followed by the assembly line. In the same token we could also affirm that the assembly line brought the violent struggle of the thirties and so on. 'Destruction makes room for construction'. Why polarize those two meanings?

Another caustic remark by Glucksmann about the condition of professional Marxist-Leninists is that they are found among the academic intelligentsia in France. The same cannot be said however for the United States and Canada. Liberal thinking prevails here instead. This point should not even be discussion, remaining only speculation on both sides —

On the level of logic, the major contribution he makes is found in the formulation of concepts about limits

and the principle of paradoxes. The concept of limit entails Socratic doubt of knowledge (I know that I do not know). His metaphysical construct questions whether 'to find a limit is actually going over the limit itself'.

The principle of paradox, although not fully explored or articulated, shows the irony in revolutions often realizing a State opposite to what they were supposed to set up: from liberty to all to a state of detente in a dictatorial fashion. Glucksmann makes clear that he does not wish to offer solutions. The only solutions, he says, are what the State enforces: wars. Glucksmann's own war is hurled against ideology, and in particular against the German master thinkers: Fichte, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche — all of them in the same category. The four philosophers are painted to profess anti-semitism, to such an extent that they and their ideologies would not resist Nazism. Why such a presumed anti-semitism, taken out of context as the analogical connector in this analysis? Simply because ideology, of the kind related to the nineteenth century German philosophy, condemns Jews' anti-state stance. Glucksmann's ambiguity on the definition of the State cannot go unnoticed. One should wonder how a religiously based human association, such as Judaism, does not constitute a State. Going deeper into this argument, one should question Glucksmann's lack of analysis of religion as of the long history of religious domination in the Western world. Using the same analogy that Glucksmann adopts, how can we not consider the historical premise, the theological construct of religion is the root of the problem, which persecutes non-orthodoxy.

The overall human condition or the overall economic hegemony is totally overlooked by his analysis. At its best we have a pre-occupation with ontological issues, at the loss of political, economic, and social considerations. He takes Lenin's statement: "Les Marxistes ne préconisent en aucun cas ni le principe fédératif, ni la décentralisation. Un grand Etat centralisé constitue un énorme progrès historique du monde entier..." (Marxists are not in favour in any circumstances of that federal principle, neither of a decentralization. A large centralized State constitutes a great historical process that goes from mediaeval fragmentation to that future socialist unity of the entire world...) and accuses the State of being the sole owner of power. If the State and the people are not the same entity, then is it possible to have a self-government where the people represent themselves in an organizational body? Would this be considered a non-State? Or what is actually a non-State condition? Deducing the answer in the negative from Glucksmann, the State is defined by its mechanics: it creates surveillance, it persuades its citizens to control one another, and it constructs a concrete image of its surveillance. Further he says that the history of civilization is the history of States. In other words, the history of civilization is the history of master thinkers. Now we ask, is Mr. Glucksmann placing himself into this heaven of philosophical giants? Similar to the German giants' ideological-roof-construction, leaving aside the reality of their times, Glucksmann is a master builder of metaphysical puzzles. He adopts a reductivist analysis of reality, narrowing his attack to ideology as the sole and major element responsible to genocide and other evils. The reductivist viewpoint is also dangerous because he uses an emotionally loaded metaphysics, brushing aside all socio-economic inferences. As a consequence we can forecast the increasing support his position will receive from right wing and liberal hegemonies to help him disseminate his ambiguous non-ideology.

No difference is ever made between an anti-ideological stance and a non-ideological opportunism, as the liberals would love to support. In the extreme, Glucksmann would probably support the following statement: "We don't want politics. The Government has non-partisan politics because if we were to have parties right away, we would again fall into contamination. The only condition is that men do not mix their work with politics". (General Pinochet, appeared in TIME, October 1, 1973.)

More details are given in the book on 'how' ideologies operate: it first ideologically prepares people to revert to a political power, then it goes into extremist activities and terrorism, and finally it normalizes the situation while concluding the revolution. Revolutionary ideology, he says, does not preserve utopism, fatalism, and traditionalism. Are perhaps these 'backward' conditions eternal and 'natural'? It is presumed so all along, indeed 'people' are imagined as being 'comme-tout-le-monde'. On which level is this typological configuration imagined? It is forgivable only because of the nature of language, this analysis being limited and often inappropriate in describing an everchanging condition. Then how can we believe the

argument on the fiction of the State, and not believe that the common-people are also a fiction?

We are told that the dissuasion strategy is superceding the persuasion strategy. Is he referring to his own strategy or do we have an effect of present conditions that are affecting us all equally? He sympathizes with the Soviet dissidents. He cultivates a compatibility between dissuasion strategy and dissidence.

When we consider dissidence as a form of behaviour, and the dissuasion strategy as a language we have in the end what he considers cultural revolution (i.e. ideology) to be: the alphabetisation of the people, who learn how to speak and how to behave (in a perjorative sense).

Glucksmann cultivates, by attacking his German giants, an aspiration to enter the same club of grand philosophy. He states that ideologies are adopted only a century later; that is, we are adopting in this century the ideas and theses from the nineteenth century, proof being given by Marxism. Reading the implication a bit further, we understand Glucksmann's anti-ideology fitting perfectly well within the history of texts that will be adopted in the future. Indeed he prophesizes that 'Le siècle suivant sera celui des pédagogues'. The master thinker leaves the role of revolutionary ideologues and becomes the counter-revolutionary pedagog, leaving and yet staying in the realm of ideology and playing the game with the principle of contradiction. He understands the McLuhanesque media thesis and states that the (future?) philosophy is now a marriage between 'electricity and the power of literacy'.

In his further attack against the Capital, as being non-existent and being just a book, he should not be taken seriously. He is playing the game of paradoxes in present electric culture (to paraphrase the media experts). He also annihilates with the stroke of semantics the validity to speak of the 'work', thus being for him an abstraction as well. To explain the dissolution of the existence of the Capital, he states that one cannot think of a singular lump or Capital since in reality we have monopolies fighting one another. How can we not consider lump or Capital another. How can we not consider the monopolies as a single class with the same class interests?

We do not know the interests that are bursessing Glucksmann's position, we can only conjecture it by implication. Is he riding the wave of the avant-garde thinkers who purposely attempts to be a step ahead of everybody else and returns to an anti-position in order to beat the position (ideology) itself, like the proto-typical twentieth century anti-art, anti-past (neo-futurism) syndromes? Or is he playing a strategy that fits with Einstein's principle of relativism, that Glucksmann calls the principle of contradiction? The book flirts with the concept of paradoxes, asking the question whether 'reality contains everything. If it does contain its own evaluation it cannot be evaluated. If it does not contain its own evaluation, it still cannot be evaluated'. To suggest a way out of the dilemma, we would not adopt only a reductive logic to analyze 'totalities'. The work of approximative compound of analyses of a multiple nature is a more appropriate method to criticize ideology and Nazism.

The error of philosophy is for Glucksmann its limitation in giving meanings to 'what' rather than 'how'. In turn, he also never gives direction on 'how' to proceed. The difference being the gap between general and particular ontologies. In relation to Marxism, the twentieth century has shown the distance from both the actualization and the total elimination of Marxism. In frustration, Glucksmann places himself along an ambiguous liberalism, that he implies is anarchic. Capitalism, being the dominant ideology today, will appropriate the 'new philosophy' spread more smoothly worldwide. The non-ideology surfaces as an alignment with liberal economic interests, recovering from the mistakes of physical violence. Under the pretext of an anti-ideology, the new domination by an elite (with economic and power interests) over the majority of uneducated and the labour enslaved is now normalized. The new fascism, more cautious and yet blatant, is stepping in, backed up by non-ideological positions of the new philosophers, eager to enter the commodity heaven of 'utopic fatalistic traditionalism' (to paraphrase the new master thinker's philosophy). Normalcy 'comme-tout-le-monde', in captivity of electronic illiteracy, is the new alignment of the new philosophy, as old as the human exploitation of the world.





# El Infierno (Hell) Life Inside A Uruguayan Torture Centre

— a Testimony

## Author's Note

Dozens of my compatriots could write a more authentic, vivid report than I, but they are in no position to do so. Some are in prison; others lie buried in some dank orchard; so it is left to me to write this, rather than the people better qualified to do so. I myself have endured a mere iota of totalitarian brutality in our country.

ALL NAMES IN THIS REPORT ARE FALSE.  
THE REST OF THE REPORT IS PAINFULLY TRUE.

Montevideo, November 1976.

During 1975 and 1976, hundreds of Uruguayans, including myself, were in **El Infierno** (Hell). Someone — we don't know when — called it that. The place lives up to its name.

What is **El Infierno**? A place not yet located. By comparing notes and talking to other comrades, we have come to the conclusion that there must be at least three or four Hells. Torture is carried out in private houses, as well as jails and offices, but **El Infierno** is a place set up exclusively as a torture center. After several days, I decided there were about 500 people there. My number was one hundred and something. I was horrified when, one day, I heard them call out for Number 345.

How do you reach the place? On the floor of a private car or van, blindfolded and handcuffed, with your hands behind your back. At first, you are in a totally silent place. I tried to smell something — it was all I was capable of. I couldn't smell the sea or the countryside, only trees in spring. Then came the first interrogation — quite mild. Name? "You've already got my identity card," I argued. The reply — my first kick. Your address? Profession? Political affiliation? Parents' name? — even if they are dead and buried. End of first interrogation. Deduction: I don't know why I am here.

I stumbled into **El Infierno**. My first impression — music; loud music (too loud); loudspeakers playing Negro or Cuban dance music out of tune. I was given a seat and a number on a piece of cardboard was hung round my neck on a length of string. I discovered this another day, when they called out my number and I didn't respond. It was a crude apprenticeship. They dragged me by the piece of cord round my neck over a lot of tins, wooden planks and crates. Consequently, I fell three times and each time they punched me in the ribs, saying, "That's to make you walk properly, you communist shit." I had to learn to be blind.

Life never varied in **El Infierno**. You were always sitting down, and sitting down in the correct fashion, not moving your feet or dropping your head.

I had arrived on the afternoon of 7 November. I tried very hard to distinguish between night and day — why, I don't know; still, I did. It always seemed to be the same time of day — an eternal night for people without eyes. But we had ears and I could hear everything: the coughs of men and women, uncontrolled lamenting and groans of great pain. I immediately recognized the cries of a friend. That was when my torture began — my personal torture. Afterwards, they brought me some food, I was not at all hungry at the time, but I recalled a friend's advice, never refuse a scrap of food from the enemy, as you never knew when you would get any more. He was right. It was a liquid, more like

excrement than food; but I ate it up. Friend, you were right: there was no more excrement until the following night.

We were all seated in rows according to number, although the numbers were not in sequence. I was among the thirties and forties. There was constant screaming and that music which was driving me insane. I don't think it bothered the rest so much. I asked others elsewhere what they felt about it and no one seemed to mind that torture as much as I did. There was an indescribable noise from the loudspeakers, which were installed on both sides of the room and tuned into different stations. What with this and the sheer volume, you couldn't blot it out. It went on all through the night, as I learned on my first day. We pulled our chairs towards the other end of the room, apparently nearer to what could be called the right-hand speaker, but neither speaker ever stopped.

The night passed slowly and was just like the daytime, except that there were evidently fewer guards around — unless some of them were simply asleep.

At dawn, they began to call out certain numbers. The first day, I recall, it was numbers 39, 43, and 117. Fifteen to thirty minutes later, I realised where they had gone. Number 39 was a woman, as I was later to find out, and I heard her screaming that morning. The "torture machine" (torture room) was right there, close by. The other two were men. They screamed and cursed. The woman screamed increasingly weakly and intermittently. Presently, I heard them dragging chairs and things and some movement beside me. The first comrade, whom I recognized, continued crying. She always cried during every torture session. They seated someone beside me. I wanted to see something — a face — anything. Then I began to attack my blindfold; the blindfold consisted of a piece of wide plastic tape, stuck directly over my eyes, with a bandage tied very tightly over that. This produces a splitting headache. My hands were handcuffed in front of me in such a way that I could slide my fingers under the blindfold at the top of the bridge of my nose. I could see the floor and my hands — nothing else. It was a concrete floor and the very hard seats were wooden. These discoveries distracted me. Nobody saw me, but it was only by chance, because later I saw soldiers armed with machineguns facing us in a row. Probably my shortness was an advantage; very likely I was concealed by the person in front of me. I continued to explore my surroundings. On my right, there was a puddle, caused by Number 39, who had just been in the "machine". She was seated on her chair, unconscious and soaked to the skin, bound to the chair beneath her armpits. For a moment, I did not move, I remained quite still and became afraid that someone would call out my number. Presently, I leaned my head back and could clearly see the guards facing us. There were some sort of mattresses behind them, and I saw a very old (he looked 100) grey-haired man stretched out on one; I realised he was the person who had been continually groaning. The woman next to me coughed. She asked for some water and was told they would give her some once she had told them what she was supposed to tell them. She did not reply. By now, I could tell that there were chairs in front of me, behind me and beside me. I could touch the one in front with my feet, but not the ones behind and beside me. Then I kicked the one in front and received a hoarse cough by way of reply. I had made contact with somebody.

The next day passed as slowly as the night. It was my second day there. A voice (which I recognized) asked if we might stand up for a while. Silence. The atmosphere was tense. Someone else said, "May we stand

up for a bit?" That would be marvellous. They were obviously discussing it. Then one of the pigs shouted, "All right!" We rose to our feet with sighs of relief, also-cries of pain. This was the greatest pleasure you could have in the place! They were changing guard that that was why they were so nice. The next lot of guards came on duty immediately afterwards: "Sit down everybody! Keep upright! Attention! Don't move! Keep your heads and feet still! Bastards!" There were punches and thumps; chairs and people were knocked down, groaning. That was how they made their triumphant entry. That was how they said good morning. The woman next to me fell down. Someone made a move to help her. "Sit down, you shit!" She remained unconscious on the floor for goodness knows how long. Then she asked for water and someone, who sounded very young, threw a bucket of water over. Unlike what happens in films, she lapsed into unconsciousness again.

They announced that we could go to the toilet, but broke their promise. We spent the afternoon listening to black dance music and pop. I couldn't stand those loudspeakers any more. I was going mad.

I was sure I would be insane by the end of the second day. I must try to keep detached to stop myself from going mad. The best thing, probably, would be to concentrate on the rhythm — I didn't know the words of any of the songs. If I didn't do something, I would go mad. I raised my handcuffed hands. "What do you want?" "I want to go home." What a blunder! It could have cost my my life. But I managed to divert my attention from the loudspeakers and started to study the jailers' feet. They were wearing jeans and "Oxford bags." You could tell from their voices that they were very young. They used gym shoes in order to move about silently. I sensed them standing motionless beside or behind me. Occasionally, they called out to each other, using nicknames ("Pocho," "Caiman"), and some who answered were right beside me. You couldn't be sure of anything; there may have been three or four of them for each one of us.

My second day was ending. Oh! To go to the toilet — I certainly needed to by now! I raised my hands and they led me away. The toilets were at the end of the barracks. There were no basins and only three lavatories. There were no doors. I had to relieve myself in public. The guard who had led me there started to whisper to someone. I became wary — I had heard of men as well as women being raped. Now that I was alone with them, I regretted having asked to go to the toilet. I responded to their pawing with obscenities, trying to undermine their sense of masculinity. I couldn't tell what kind of creature they were. Laughing, they shoved me back to my chair. I had come out of it alright that time. I learnt it was not wise to go to the toilet. I responded so I only raised my hands when others did so too. Some months later, a comrade told me how he had been raped in those very toilets by three of them. No doubt they were drugged, for he said they didn't smell of alcohol. Beforehand, they had gagged him to stop him shouting. They certainly didn't take this precaution because of us; possibly it was for their superiors benefit, or to prevent their colleagues finding out about their perversions or infidelities. After they had raped him, they stuck some copies of our clandestine political manifesto (written to inform the public) up his anus. He lost consciousness and came round in a sort of hospital, how long afterwards, he did not know.

## The "Torture Machine"

On my third day there, they dragged me from my chair and, without calling out my number, made me





climb a staircase beside the wall. The yellow tiled steps were very worn away. I was about to have my first interrogation in the torture room. They were interrogating a man that morning and I was going to witness the process in order to know what was in store for me.

"Can you hear?" a man said. "Good! If you don't talk, you'll get the same treatment." I knew who he was and what they wanted to get out of him. I also knew that he would not tell them anything. From what they said, it was evident that he had been there a long while. They way their voices echoed suggested it was a small room. It might contain a table. They sat me down in a chair and brought over something like an upright ashtray which they placed on my right, level with my shoulders. I found out later that it was a tape recorder. The same friend who was their being tortured in the room told me. He lay groaning on the floor. The previous night, he had been suspended by his arms and "softened up." "Softening up" could be anything. It might be electrical shocks to the genitals or other sensitive parts of the body, or being punched. When you fainted, you got "underwater treatment," which meant having your head submerged in a big tin bucket full of excrement, urine and water. The smell is intolerable. He told me this, and other things, some months later, when he was allowed to sit on the floor and talk from time to time. He never actually told us everything they did to him, nor did we tell him everything they did to us. We did not disclose the most extreme, painful and humiliating things. Day after day, and night after night, for 63 days, they tortured him like this. Such was his physical and moral strength that, months later, after he had left **El Infierno** and was in the barracks, they would use him for torture experiments. An officer, accompanied by pupils who were to be given a "practical demonstration," was in charge of these experiments. **El Paco** (a nickname meaning "the thin man") was the guinea pig. The officer would start by indicating the most sensitive parts of the body for electric shock torture and thus learn their lesson thoroughly, despite the risk of **El Paco** dying at any moment.

Eventually, everybody in **El Infierno** could recognize **El Paco's** screams. He never stopped swearing at them. That was all they got out of him — curses; not a single bit of information. Neither torture nor humiliation could break him. Even when they were not torturing him, **El Paco** continued to curse them.

I know of many who acted in the same heroic way. In **El Infierno**, you lose touch with day and night

very easily; just one visit to the "machine" is enough. It happened to me one day, but I re-orientated myself the next day when the radio announced the news at 3:00 p.m. That was a slip by the guards and they immediately changed the station. They never let us hear the news.

#### Numbers increase

Fresh prisoners kept arriving. They came at any time of day, especially early on. The smell was obnoxious. Some women had menstruated but were not allowed to wash. One of them said, in the toilet, that she had menstruated three times without being able to wash. And, while being tortured, you involuntarily urinated and wetted yourself. Our clothes were smothered with what was presumably food. As we had nothing to put our plates on, and were handcuffed, we couldn't help spilling our food. We stank.

It was a cold spring, and we were freezing as we had to sit still. Sometimes, they actually gave us blankets, but the next guard to come on duty would remove them. On the fourth night, they threw most of us on to the dirty blankets from the soldier's barracks. This was to help us sleep. We all lay piled up there, men and women together, for four or five hours, suffering from our own smell. Worst of all, they kept watching us, and when someone nodded off, they threw water on him, or pulled his hair or kicked him. The women would shield their breasts. Then, all of a sudden, someone they called **Chico** would run at top speed right over our outstretched bodies. Lack of space prevented you moving. I began to have difficulty breathing. Presumably one of them told one of his superiors (he might have known that I suffer from asthma). He came over and removed me from the pile. This was worse — awful. I was lying at someone's feet who was talking incoherently. I listened and recognized the voice of someone I loved, but everything being said was horrible. Just hearing it made me suffer. And the night seemed endless. When I got out of **El Infierno**, I discovered that the comrade whom I had thought I heard had never been detained. How we can fool ourselves! I could have sworn it was he! Everything is confused there and you can believe you are listening to your father or your children.

They tortured us all day. They kept taking people off in groups of three or four. They would drag them back and throw them on the floor, or, occasionally, if there were in a very bad state, onto the mattresses. Many were no longer groaning; they were unconscious. Those of us who had not yet gone (including me) were tense with apprehension. From time to

time, someone would give a faint cry and the comrade who was forever weeping wept the entire day. They took her away at nightfall. I could hear her crying in the distance. Her cries grew louder and louder. She screamed, was terrified, in agony. She was a wife and mother. I knew her well. She is now in Punta de Rieles prison. Suddenly, unexpectedly, everything stopped. A grim silence set in. Someone was running. There was whispering. The torture stopped; so did the screams. A few moments passed. A car abruptly started up, set off and was driven away into the distance. **SOMEBODY HAD DIED.** It didn't matter whether the person was young or old, male or female. Someone had died.

An hour later, they got their breath back. The radios are turned on again and some loud cracks a joke. Only he, not even his friends, laugh at the joke.

That night, the guards on duty started to "soften" our joints; they inflicted electric shocks on us as we sat there on our chairs. They spared nobody. To make matters worse, they had poured disinfectant all over the concrete floor to camouflage our smell, and this increased the effects of the shock.

#### The Betrayal

Another day, it was my turn for the **planton** (forced standing) treatment, along with two others: one man, who, judging from his voice, was over 60; and a young woman, not much more than a girl. The **planton** involves standing with your legs apart. It is unwise to fall, but standing like that for hours is very difficult. At dusk, the old man fell and three of them began to interrogate him. They practically drove him out of his mind. They said shocking things about his wife and daughter-in-law and about what they were going to do to him next. I gathered, from overhearing the interrogation, that the old man had two sons, both fine men and fine workers.

At nightfall, the old man "betrayed" them. The young woman wept slowly.

A year later, I learnt that all three had been together in the same jail and I was able to round off the story. The old man really did go mad in the end. He prayed all day and asked his sons to do the same. They never spoke to him again, but they gave him their blankets on cold nights so that he would not freeze to death, for the soldiers treated him very badly and, on top of everything else, mocked him — this was his reward for collaborating with them.

The second week was more tolerable; my spine



photos courtesy of Amnesty International



gradually adjusted to the endless sitting. But the music still drove me mad. One day, we sang a tango tune and I recognized X's voice. She was a wonderful woman. Her spirit was never broken and she addressed the guards condescendingly, as though they were children or simpletons. I never discovered what she had to endure, but I can imagine.

Towards the end of the week, I noticed they were becoming more organized and getting everything they needed. To begin with, they had only one doctor. He supervised the torture and, during interrogation, I heard him advising the torturers on which parts of the body to hit a person who had got some illness. The doctor dealt with such details. It was not presumed convenient for anybody else to die, but, occasionally, as a result of over-enthusiasm and drugs, the torturers' hands would "slip." Some people died because of these "slips."

At the end of the week, a male nurse joined the team. After a while, we managed to recognize him. He was a young homosexual policeman whose name began with A. He distributed some medicine to women and the oldest of us.

Nuber 69 was pregnant. I saw her three times: once on the **planton**, once on the floor, and once early in the morning, on the day she aborted. We heard sounds of movement and groans and guessed what was happening. They treated her on a filthy mattress on the floor. This was where a life was prematurely ended. By now, the baby boy would have been learning to walk on some warm sandy beach. Later, I learnt that, as they had decided it would be risky to beat her up, they had stuck hot needles under her nails to make her tell them where her husband was, as they couldn't find him. It should have been very easy to find him: he had been detained for a long time by another authority, and they didn't even know! And so they wasted a life! They killed a child!

Another day, they checked the bandages. Obviously, many people had done the same as me. They were terrified that we might recognize them. They changed everybody's plastic tape and tightened the cloth bandages. At this moment, I am holding one of these bandages, made of good quality coarse cotton. Prominently displayed on the edge is "Made in USA." Mine was not of such good quality; in fact, it wasn't much more than a rag, torn during some raid.

**An Exploit**

The morning they checked the bandages, they found that one of the lads had made holes for his eyes in his bandage and had been watching everything that went on for several days. They had forgotten to put the tape under the bandage. What spirit! I found out later that the man was a countryman from Minas. But he paid a heavy price for what he had done. They stuck the plastic tape on and pushed their fingers into his eyes. "That's so you'll never be able to see again, bastard!" they said. He jumped with pain. When he got out of **El Infierno**, they took him to the military hospital, and I know this was because of his eyes, although I don't know what happened to him in the end. But I ran into his sons in the park

one day and asked them if their father needed anything. "Spectacles," they replied.

It was hell for them as well as us, although they were obviously better off. How much better? This is illustrated by the following story. One morning, they took a large group of us to the toilet (we were now allowed to go to the toilet, but only to defecate) and they kept control of this. Because of our diet and sitting still so much, we were getting more and more constipated. We all stayed a long time in the toilet that morning and there was only one guard. He summoned one of his colleagues, but he did not come, so he gave vent to his fury on us. He began to strike out indiscriminately with his fists and feet. Nobody moved. We waited to be hit, not knowing from where the blow might come. We didn't even shout out. The guard grew more violent. Some women fell and banged their heads on the lavatory walls and bowls. His colleagues heard what was going on and dragged him forcibly away. He had gone mad. Like Dante's *Inferno*, this one had its own rules.

**The Night of the Dogs**

The night of the dogs was one of the worst nights. We had already heard dogs barking and had imagined they were like those fine, faithful animals which we keep as pets and love like children. But these dogs were quite different, as I was to discover. They suspended three people, a woman and two men, in a corner. They hung the woman by her hair and the men under the arms. Their feet were four or five centimeters above the ground. The dogs stood underneath them, barking. I could visualize the three of them trembling with fear. The woman (fortunately for her) fainted. The dogs never stopped barking. At dawn, they asked them if they had anything to say to the commanding officer. No one replied. They brought the woman round by throwing water on her, and asked her the same question. She did not reply either. They took her down and threw her on the floor. The dogs attacked her. "Be quiet, Fox!" one of them said. The dog grunted affectionately at its masters. Then they all went, dogs and men, the latter leading, slowly and purposefully, the dogs following, faithful and murderous.

Soon after, someone else cut the ropes and the men fell to the ground. I can imagine the pain they were in. After being suspended like this for hours on end, all your blood runs to your arms and legs, and dropping suddenly is agonizing. After falling, they were motionless. Yic, the man from Cerro died. This had been his final torture. His wife saw him in the barracks after the incommunicado order was repealed. In front of the guards and other detainees, he shouted out to everyone about how he had suffered and been tortured. Afterwards, he was taken back to **El Infierno**, where he died, suspended above dogs. That was his last torture. He entered **El Infierno** and left the same way, SILENT. Despite the prohibition to open the coffin, those who did saw his darkened legs and torn body.

**Milk**

One evening, about a month later, a guard walked

up and down the rows asking if anyone wanted some milk. It was the first such offer I had heard. Naturally, I wanted some. Many people declined the offer. Those who accepted had some from the same jug. It was cold, tempting and incredibly pure-looking in the middle of such filth — the jug too. I don't know how long it was after drinking the milk that I regained consciousness. I'm not sure to this day whether it was the milk that made me faint, but I found myself abruptly falling into an abyss full of colours and strange shapes. My Aunt Adela was there with an enormous bunch of roses; each rose the size of a three- or four-year-old child. They were bright beautiful colours. My aunt was there, yet I knew she wasn't. I knew where I was perfectly well, and I knew she would never be there; all the same I stretched out to touch her. I was suspicious of the milk and didn't want any more. Yet I didn't associate what had happened with the milk. A few days later, I saw my aunt. I could never be sure whether my suspicions were justified, but I invariably advised people not to drink the milk, even though I may have been wrong about it.

In all the detention centers in our country, it is usual to administer hallucinatory drugs. Everyone reacts to them in different ways, but comparing notes, we discovered that nobody became completely divorced from reality. The drugs made us partially unconscious, but they did not make us ecstatic, as people in American films about drug addicts. Everyone experienced an intensification of the imagination, seeing all sorts of things — nature, the sea, fields and so on. One comrad told us how he had seen the sea and felt the waves lapping at his feet while, simultaneously, a guard was standing beside him singing.

Throughout the month, there was a constant turnover of prisoners. Some people's numbers would no longer be called and new ones were. I don't think they continued to use the number of anyone who had gone. By now they had got as calling out Number 500 and higher. I never again heard Number 69.

Throughout this period, practically every day, they reiterated that nobody was under arrest, no one had been arrested, but **kidnapped**.

**Purgatory**

The prisoner turnover continued, more people came, others left — but where did they go? They were obviously not calling out their numbers after they had been removed.

Someone took hold of my arm and pulled me up. I was let to a beautiful, elegant armchair — no doubt stolen on some raid. They seated me in it and handed me a piece of paper, which I read under my bandage.

I HEREBY DECLARE THAT, WHILE I HAVE BEEN HERE, I HAVE NOT BEEN TORTURED AND WAS PROPERLY FED:

..... (signature)

"Sign!" they said, and I signed.









# The Myth of the Artist As Rebel and Hero

Kenneth Coutts-Smith

A Paper delivered to the Caucus For Marxism and Art, at the Conference of the College Art Association, New York — January, 1978.

I do not propose to present for your consideration a paper in conventional form exploring a defined and specific problem in the broad area of our professional interest. This is not to imply that I personally have any **general** objection to a focused art-historical scholarship; though I do have a specific one. The latter, of course, is towards that form of "research" which depends upon an idealisation of culture, upon severing the art-event from its social context (or, at best, admitting merely a simplistic and vulgar determinism) — ostensibly in order to provide an objective historical detachment, but, effectively, to justify a particular class view of culture.

Also, my own preoccupations have always been those of an art-critic rather than of an art-historian; though, perhaps inevitably, given our present social reality, criticism (being structurally less institutionalised than academic art-history) both demands and achieves a more complex sense of historic relations. My personal attempts at analysis, frequently confused though they may be, have been for some time now of a dialectical nature. By this, I do not mean that I simply attempt to observe events in a dialectical relationship of influence and progression, but that I also struggle to develop not merely my thought, but the form of my analysis in dialectical terms.

Marxism is not simply a way of explaining the human social experience, it is also a way of thinking about it, and ultimately, of living it. The dialectical position, seeking as it does, to develop new and unexpected relationships of thought, is obviously in conflict with the traditional art-historical impetus towards the accumulation and stockpiling of inert information. The difference is analogous to that between the development of a body of lived human experience on the one hand and the accumulation of property on the other.

The method of my discourse will consist, then, of an interim report (for dialectical thought is never finalised, always provisional) of some of my thinking concerning what appears to be a central task now facing a **social** criticism of art: namely, the dismantling of a structure of myth and assumption concerning the nature of art (and the self-view of the artist) that tends to obscure our present understanding. And inevitable drawback, however, in such a context as the present one, is that the attempt to develop what Fredrick Jameson has called "thought to the second power" lies, as he says, in its "holistic **totalizing** character: as though you could not say one thing until you had first said everything; as though with each new idea you were bound to recapitulate the entire system."<sup>1</sup>

Inevitably, therefore, I shall raise points that you may well consider in isolation as self-evident, even simplistic. This risk is taken, however, not merely in the hopes of achieving a dialectical exposition, but also in terms of the fundamental teleology of the dialectical method. It is taken for a "tactical" reason, if you will; since, as I understand it, a Marxist perspective on either the criticism or the history of art (as on any other area of human activity) implies a praxis, a transcendence of passive scholarship into the active and on-going process of inventing the world.

I do not imagine that anyone would now question the fact that for some time there has been a widespread and developing attitude of **refusal** on the part of a significant number of contemporary artists towards the basic institutions of the capitalist art-

market. What is debatable, however, is the extent to which this tendency represents a social (indeed a **socialist**) analysis of the institutions and cultural ideology of capitalism despite a vociferous quasi-Marxist rhetoric. What is also debatable, though less obviously so for reasons that I trust will shortly become apparent, is the extent that this tendency springs from a collective rather than an individual motivation, from a shift in the consciousness of the art-community rather than from the re-affirmation (though no doubt an unconscious and last-ditch one) of the old bohemian imperatives of personal creative voluntarism.

Though largely an inchoate phenomenon (mingling, at its extremes, social utopianism and a sort of disillusionment engendered by the recognition of failed promises — idealist anarchism and sour grapes) this current has, over the last decade, peaked in various ways across a spectrum that stretches from organized demonstration and confrontation to various sequential attempts at formulating fora for debates and introspective analysis.<sup>2</sup> I have said: "over the last decade....," and it would not seem to be insignificant that we are now at a point almost exactly ten years after the confused events that ran like a cultural brush-fire through the capitalist world and dimaxed in Paris, in May, 1968.

It has taken that long for the unformulated and reflexive refusal towards a certain structure of ideological assumptions to begin to develop effectively into an analysis of the nature of culture and the role of art at this present stage of the evolution of capitalism. This Spring will doubtless provide a focal point for both the re-assessment of the "meaning" of 1968 and for the consolidation of strategies that are applicable to the realities of late capitalism.

The world **realities** is here emphasized, since it seems in retrospect that 1968 may have indicated only the **apparent** rejection of a socio-cultural system that concretized and justified the commodification of culture. One reason for this suspicion, in the broad arena, lies in the remarkably rapid breakdown of "The Movement," in the apparent **volte-face**, the withdrawal, in many cases into quasi-mystical subjectivism and ecological mystification. One would rightly expect any serious critique of capitalist cultural ideology to have demonstrated more stamina in failure, and to have demanded in the first place a more solid reward than that of an "instant" political gratification.

Another reason for this suspicion may be observed in the field of our own professional interest. It has often been claimed that the phenomenon of the "de-materialization" of art springs essentially from a political response on the part of the artist who, in rejecting the traditional and capitalist structures of the art-market, opposes a "cabal" of dealers, critics and speculators, and, consequently, attempts to produce purely conceptual and non-material works of art that cannot be bought or sold. In this case, one would rightly expect to note the wide emergence of a political (or at least a **social**) content in the growing complex of concept-orientated work.

As is well known, with very few, though highly visible, exceptions (Beuys, Vostell, Metzger, Haacke — all Europeans, incidentally) this did not happen. Even the claim to have accepted the challenge of non-material art to provide, as Lucy Lippard would have it, "a drastic solution to the problems of artists being bought and sold so easily along with their art..."<sup>3</sup> erodes quickly in the face of subsequent events. Rather than providing a defensive "block" of purely creative integrity, the de-materialized work of art was easily and quickly assimilated into the capitalist structure of economic relations.

This happened largely because, although the artist may have attempted genuinely for various reasons to withdraw the work itself, the physical art-object, from the sphere and domination of the capitalist art-market, he did not, at the same time, withdraw himself; that is to say, he did not withdraw his praxis, the **process** of conceiving, making and manifesting the art-object.<sup>4</sup> By trying to transform the object of art and not the process or art, the individual artist found himself trapped in essentially the same relationship as before, isolated in the face of the whole complicated capitalist mechanism of exposure and communication, of audience-recognition, fame and identity. What had not been anticipated (in an attitude that was at best a naive stance, at worst a justification) was the fact that **prestige was also property**. Even the most transparent and rigorously de-materialized works remained stubbornly subservient to the special exigencies of the art-market.

It would seem reasonable to observe in both the broad "cultural revolution" of the late 1960s and the specific phenomenon of the de-materialization of art a common re-affirmation of individual subjective imperatives which, in terms of the historical fine-art community, has traditionally manifested itself in a particular structure of attitudes that define the fundamental self-view of the artist. This self-view has, of course, throughout the modern period, been essentially structured upon the basic notion of the artist as an individual axiomatically in **opposition to** established social and cultural norms, as representing, in fact, and in his person, the ideal of rebel and hero.

Recognising this fact, it may well be that an analysis of the myth of the artist as rebel and hero, and a further understanding of the dialectical relationship of this myth to what we must call the "ideology" of the avant-garde (for clearly such a myth dictates historical events as much as it illuminates them) can help clarify the specific problems that presently confront us; and do this not merely, may I add, in critical or socio-historical terms, but also in respect to the more central question of current studio praxis.

Obviously, a necessarily short and diverse paper such as this cannot possibly indicate even the flimsiest structural framework to draw your attention to the potential that may lie in this direction, as well as to indicate (in the context of a rapidly changing social and political climate) that, though there appears to be a new understanding of the nature of the art-work that is presently emerging, there would not yet seem to be a clear concomitant reassessment of the artists' individual self-view.

I assume that we may (here, at least) accept the fundamental notion that art is a social activity, and that the manifestations of art are relative — mutating in form and essential nature as the broad cultural superstructure resonates to the shifts and developments of the economic base. This perspective inevitably concludes that the **function** of art assumes different forms under different historical conditions, and that it operates (both in regard to the collective consciousness of society and the individual consciousness of man) at any one moment in a manner appropriate to the historical moment.<sup>5</sup>

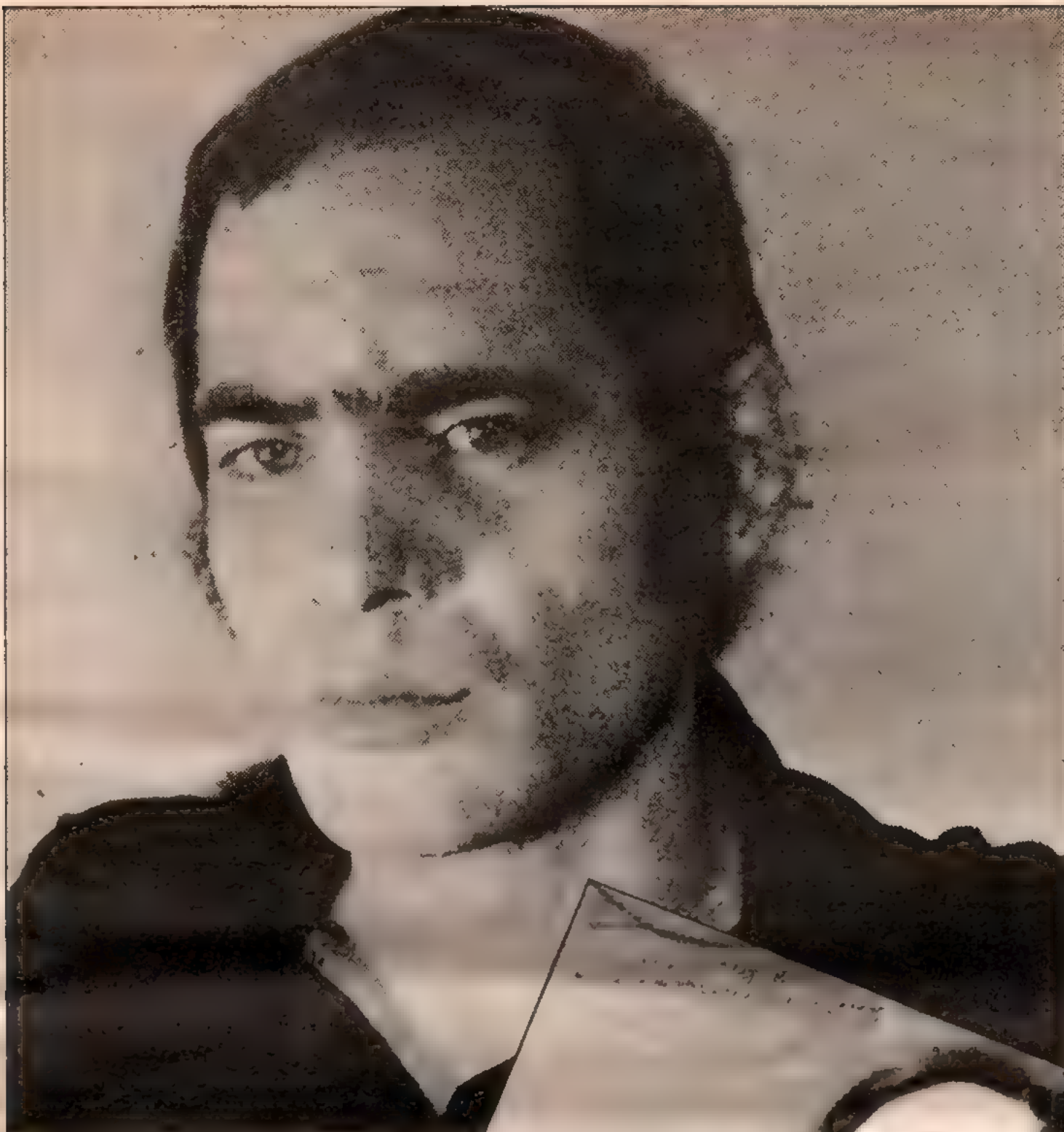
This, obviously, is a direct contradiction to the generally-held view of the nature of art in our society. It is a negation, not merely of what might be described as an academic, conventional, popular or middle-class understanding of the function and nature of visual culture, but also, it would seem, of certain assumptions central to the most progressive and advanced elements of that culture.

It has become clear in recent years that there is now  
continued on page 22





Andreas Baader, dissident activist in Germany. †1977



**DISSIDENCE  
IN  
THE  
WEST**



Lily Eng, dissident artist in Canada



# 5 POLEM

## IDEOLOGY

'NEW PHILOSOPHY' Bernard-Henri Levy  
'Open Road', J. Skovorecky

## HUMAN RIGHTS

'Heresies'  
Body Politic

## WORK

Bruno Ramirez (ZEROWORK)  
Peter Dunn & Loraine Leeson

## BEHAVIOUR

Marina Abramovic  
Socio-Biology

## COMMUNITY

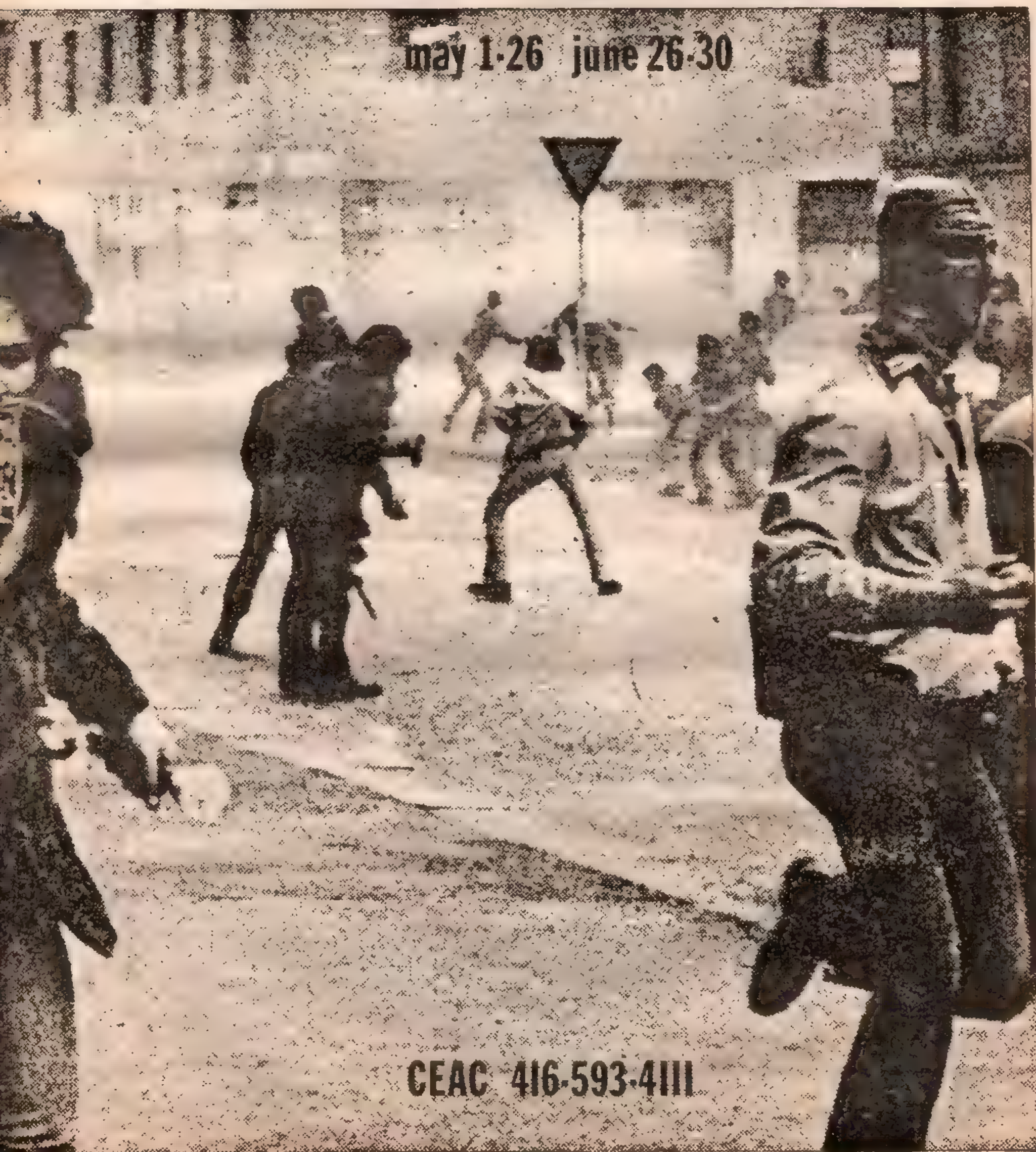
Joseph Beuys' FREE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
Maria Gloria Bicocchi ART TAPES





# ICS to the notion of anthropology

may 1-26 june 26-30



CEAC 416-593-4111



continued from page 14

no longer any essential difference between a "bourgeois" view of art (using the word in its general and classic sense of "middle-class") and an "avant-garde" one. Indeed, the congruence now appears to obviate any effective contemporary use of the latter term other than in a strictly historical sense. We may state that, in a real way, the avant-garde came to an end at the point of this very congruence; and that the term may now only be effectively used in regard to a defined historical period.

The melding of the avant-garde and the middle-class viewpoints has arrived at a consensus concerning the nature of art and of artistic activity. In one sense it is possible to state that the previous minority view central to the advanced art community (which constituted the **ideology** of the avant-garde) has now been absorbed into the larger ideology of contemporary capitalism. As an aside I must remark upon the ambiguity of the term "bourgeois" in this context; as John Berger has recently pointed out, the cultural identity of the bourgeoisie is presently in erosion not before the forces of an emergent proletariat, but in the face of a rising corporate state.<sup>6</sup>

It is an obvious error, therefore, to regard the current demise of the avant-garde as being in any way the result of an **appropriation** in a manner analogous to the recent commercial appropriation of sub-culture value in the areas of popular music, style and fashion. The expansion and acceptance of modern art in the capitalist world is clearly not simply the result of a speculative process, of the cultural and financial penetration of the art-market and the museo-critical complex. It is, rather, the result of a convergence of opposing value, and it would seem clearly to indicate the cessation of the previous mutual struggle between the bourgeois cultural world-view and that proposed by the avant-garde.

This, however, does not necessarily mean that the struggle has been resolved by an absorption, by the victory or ascension of one structure or value system. It does not even mean (as is suggested by the greater part of contemporary conventional and academic criticism) that a body of advanced ideas long misunderstood, have now become accepted. What, in fact, has occurred is that one structure, the determinate one, has now ceased to exist, has finally eroded in the face of historical change, and has, consequently, negated the justification for the opposition.<sup>7</sup>

This process has been obscured by the fact that we consistently confuse two separate notions — the idea of **modernism** in the creative arts and the idea of the **avant-garde**. Art history demonstrates a sequential process of cultural development that may be regarded as being analogous to that of increasing technological complexity; there would seem to be little doubt that artistic events, since the point of the Renaissance, anyway, have formed, in effect, a cumulative structure.

In one sense of the idea, we can observe "the modern" existing at any arbitrary point during the last five hundred years or so; we can observe an ongoing consciousness of fresh standards continually superseding even those of the immediate past. If we regard Durer, for instance, as being representative of certain aspects of the Northern Renaissance, we cannot help but also see him as a spokesman for a body of vanguard concepts, despite the fact that he seems to have largely misunderstood the ideas emanating from Italian sources.

The process of change in the visual arts, though obviously cross-linked dialectically to all the other domains of both mental and material culture, nevertheless demands and defines its own logic; the logic of a self-conscious and deliberate attempt at innovation. Yet, until comparatively recently, never was this activity at any time conceived in terms of an **opposition** to the cultural conventions of the period; thought they were, of course, frequently thought of in **contrast** to the retardataire conventions that were in the process of being superseded.

Even Romanticism (perhaps, especially Romanticism) was an expression of the dominant currents of the period. The very emergence of the idea of the artist as hero — the Byronic ideal — is consistent with the developing exaltation of individuality resultant upon the social and political consolidation of bourgeois society. The Romantic artists were not at odds with the dominant value system, and, neither, essentially, were any of the other artists until comparatively late in the nine-

teenth century.

there have been many studies of the development of both bohemia and of artistic and social non-conformism, but, to my knowledge, no-one has adequately dealt with the fact that, though this phenomenon took place to a large extent in an artistic milieu, there was a remarkable lack of consistency between social rebellion and artistic innovation.

Indeed, bohemianism, in its earlier stages, remained a purely social response, one dependent, no doubt upon the alienation experienced by artisans and decorative artists in the emerging industrial and mercantile society. There would seem to have been no co-relation whatsoever between a self-view of the artist-as-outsider and stylistic "modernism"; any understanding to the contrary is dependent upon our contemporary habit of projecting back onto the past a self-view of the artist that did not, in fact, appear until the advent of Symbolism, for it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that the concept **rebel** was to be added to that of **hero**.

Only with the full consolidation of the idea of art-for-art's-sake (and how late that finally was may be emphasised by reminding ourselves that Manet disavowed the Impressionists since he still, at that late date, entertained hopes of academic salon acceptance) did "modernism" in art discover itself in total opposition to an established social and cultural value system.

The most striking transference that took place at this point was not so much one between style and content, between formalism and narrative, but one between pictorial culture (that is to say, in effect, as it was de-socialized) so the artist institutionalized his stance of rebellious opposition. From the very beginning, from say, as a convenient date, Rimbaud's *lettre de voyant* of 1871, the new consciousness of the "avant-garde" was to be defined by the merging of two ideas: the commitment to a stylistic modernism increasingly dependent upon internal justification and the commitment to an intransigent opposition to the bourgeois cultural and moral value system.

This was, despite the fact that we are presently conditioned to regard it as a normal, even desirable, combination, a remarkable development, since at no time before has art ever sought values outside of the historically dominant ones of the period in question. The story of the avant-garde is as much the story of the search for these values as it is the story of mutating stylistic elements. With the rejection of historic reality, this search had obviously to be focused upon the various domains of the ideal, upon mysticism, hermeticism and the primitive.

We must now, as I have intimated, regard the avant-garde as a closed historical period. The apostolic succession which we have observed opening with Rimbaud, draws to a close with the generation of Pollock and Dyland Thomas. It is perhaps only in retrospect that we now notice a punctuation mark that divides us today from heroism, the rebellion and the confidence of the Abstract Expressionists. We have certainly taken note of the changed role of art in contemporary society; our very presence here testifies to our disquiet with the concept of art as a simple commodity.

Yet, it is necessary to ask, are we not still looking, to a large extent at the world with eyes and minds conditioned by a self-view that no longer applies? For, quite simply, what application can there be in an ideology that remains based, in any form, in the idea of *épater les bourgeois*, when the bourgeoisie, as a distinct class, no longer exists?

Avant-garde culture, throughout its history, was balanced and opposed by what we can only describe as bourgeois culture. It is notable that this polarization vanished as the avant-garde drew to a close. What remained, for example, of bourgeois visual culture (I think here of an artist like Andrew Wyeth) was inexorably drawn by the new corporate institutions of art, the museo-critical complex, into the post-bourgeois mainstream. The rapid assimilation of avant-garde visual culture is a consequence of the emergence of a post-bourgeois society, of the emergence of the corporate state.

The paradox of the bourgeois world was that it required the artist to assume the role of rebel and hero in order to ritually justify the ideology of competitive individualism while it was necessarily scandalised by the artist as the antithesis of the social conformism required by mercantile society.

It is certain that a specific role was demanded of the artist during his co-existence with bourgeois culture, and the best of our predecessors handled that role with exemplary moral commitment. It is equally certain that this role has been for some time now a clumsy anachronism, devoid of moral scale. Finally it is certain we must clarify our individual and collective self-view if we wish to avoid being drawn, as passive agents, into the cultural institutions of the capitalist corporate state. In historically losing the role of the artist as rebel and hero, we stand at risk of being embarked upon the role of the artist as bureaucrat.

#### Footnotes:

1. Frederick Jameson, **Marxism and Form**, Princeton New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1971, pp 306-307.
2. I am thinking here of a sequence, in New York for instance, that spans the period from the Art Worker's Coalition of 1969, **The Fox** and similar polemical journals, up to the formation of the Caucus for Marxism and Art and the present meeting. Similar developments may easily be observed in any developed capitalist country with differing degrees of intensity. The most advanced formulations of this critique (much more advanced than in the United States) have taken place in France and Germany.
3. "I think the art world is probably going to be able to absorb conceptual art as another "movement" and not pay much attention to it. The art establishment depends so greatly on objects which can be bought and sold that I don't expect it to do much about an art that is opposed to the prevailing systems.... The artists who are trying to do non-object art are introducing a drastic solution to the problems of artists being bought and sold so easily along with their art..." Lucy Lippard, **Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object**, Praeger, New York, 1973, pp 7-8.
4. By and large (as an examination of the majority of the artist's statements contained in Lippard's book) the motivation would seem to have been a subjectivist and personal one.
5. Care should be taken here to understand this in a dialectical context, not as a form of determinism, not (most certainly not) as the type of reflective theory common to so many art-history text books which maintain a direct and vulgar relationship between events in art and the spheres of politics and material culture. I am thinking here of the banality (indeed the essential falsity) of the synoptic tables in Janson.
6. John Berger, **Ways of Seeing**, B.B.C. and Penguin Books, London 1972, p 32.
7. The erosion of the struggle between bourgeois culture and the avant-garde raises an interesting and crucial problem. The determinate factor of that struggle was the imperative towards constant innovation. This process, traditionally, has always operated within the domain of style. The fact that there has been no significant stylistic "jump" for some years would appear to bear out the central contention. Nevertheless, the impetus towards innovation itself (just as the basic self-view of the artist as rebel and hero) does not yet seem to have been cancelled out. Following upon the erosion of style (or the transcendence of it, if you will) we note the imperatives of the new penetrating into conceptual and process areas. This "innovation" would, in turn, currently appear to be giving way to a social dimension, a latter-day Polit-art. It would seem that there is a very real risk that aspects of the new socio-political consciousness in the fine-arts may be nothing more than a substitute for stylistic innovation. As an aside to this, we may also consider the following: if bourgeois culture has now been subsumed into the new culture of the corporate state, the old hostility of the avant-garde becomes irrelevant. Indeed, should this hostility even move from the social to the political plane, there would seem to be no real threat offered to the capitalist status-quo. As long as vanguard culture focuses its hostility upon the target of an effectively defunct bourgeois culture then it will be tolerated. Therefore may not aspects of the present development in Marxism be a permitted, even encouraged, safety-valve? The fact that this phenomenon is operating so strongly within the structured academic institutions would suggest that this might be so.







montage: Paul McLellan

In addition to the issues of social democracy and urban terrorism, continued support of trade unionism is one of the most urgent and controversial questions facing the left of today. Although acknowledging the ideological myopia of unionism - its proclivity to accept limited economic gains, rather than realize a complete re-distribution of wealth - Leftists have traditionally held labour organizations to be a positive step towards the development of class consciousness. They have also recognized that Labour organizers, given suitable objective conditions, have often stood at the vanguard of revolutionary activities.

Conditions which once fostered class antagonism have been altered essentially in the modern Liberal West. The Wobblies calls for the emancipation of Labour are but muffled echoes from the past.

The media, however, in its barrage of inditements, accuses the Trade Unions of independently disrupting and undermining democracy. "But a common characteristic of the holders of such opinions, which are pronounced so freely, is an alarming ignorance of the real nature of the contemporary organization, activity and goals". It is the reality of these activities and goals which are analysed in **TRADE UNIONISM UNDER CAPITALISM**, edited by Tom Clarke and Laurie Clement.

From the classics of Marx to the radical analysis of several renowned sociologists, Clarke and Clement have collected twenty important articles which evaluate the complete spectrum of labour's relations to capital. The tone of the following contributors is set by Lenin in his famous article "What is to be done". He argued that unions, due to the limitations of their sectional economic goals, have never effectively opposed capital but are able to develop only worker's consciousness. Lenin rejects the syndicalist tenet and maintains that unions are too sociologically restricted to be the chosen instrument for achieving Socialism. The effective revolutionary—a party—is not merely dependent upon the strength of the working masses, but also on the theoretical strategies of the 'Socialist intelligentsia'.

Despite the optimism in the clashes following the October revolution, and the eventual outcome, W.M. Gallagher and J.R. Campbell

(Direct Action), basically echoed Lenin's apprehension. As we now know, the faces of the workers did not turn 'towards the goal of industrial freedom'. Labour unions were, and still remain, totally unsuited for the inevitable struggle.

Through the remainder of the book runs repeated attacks against union bureaucracy and its ineffectual reformism. It is suggested that they have essentially legitimized wage-slavery through the guise of collective bargaining. By committing themselves to the liberal mercantile view of society and ethics, labour organizations have become intrinsic components of Capitalism. They have become the pacifiers of dissent.

**TRADE UNIONS UNDER CAPITALISM**  
Edited by Tom Clarke and Laurie Clements  
Fontana/Collins Publishers 1977



# Transcriptions + Annotations

Alan Sondheim

Engels to F. Mehring, July 14, 1893: Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, it is true, but with a false consciousness. The real motive forces impelling him remain unknown to him: otherwise it simply would not be an ideological process. Hence he imagines false or seeming motive forces. Because it is a process of thought he derives its form as well as its content from pure thought, either his own or that of his predecessors. He works with mere thought material, which he accepts without examination as the product of thought, and does not investigate further for a more remote source independent of thought; indeed this is a matter of course to him, because, as all action is mediated by thought, it appears to him to be ultimately based upon thought.

Siefan Morawski, Introduction to Marx Engels on literature and art: "ideology, i.e. systems of thought which are delimited by human interests, and accordingly in attitudes toward the givens. Ideologies, which are always highly complex, are conditioned in the last instance by the pervasive contradictions and general evolution of the class-divided societies of history." "Ideology will here be considered as the statement or symptomatic expression of a pattern of social-class attitudes, interests, or habits of thought." "an author's world view — the ideology —."

I identify contemporary Marxism (for which K. Marx is in no way responsible, re. Engels August 5, 1890, quoting Marx: "All I know is that I am not a Marxist") as an ideology, possessing its own modes of discourse, reifications, based at least in part on a corpus (desiring body) of texts and trajectories through this body.

(I begin with a fear of ideology, ideological argument) An ideology by definition implies an absence: an absence of alternative trajectories through the complex semantics of our society. An ideology of optimism ignores the absent; those 138,000,000 dead — the minimum — through war or revolution in our century.

This figure, it must be noted, ignores the estimated 1.2 million Cambodian dead since the Communist takeover, plus casualties of the Cambodia-Vietnam war. The figure climbs.

If anything, these absent, whose bones we tread upon, point to several things: The danger of embracing any belief system that postulates itself as definitive, "at one with reality." The close alliance of the notion of "ideology" with "appropriation" — the embellishment of possession through ideological strategy.

The poverty of notions such as "lessons from history" (whose lessons), "Marxism," "capitalism," "any-ism" as legitimized steering mechanisms in a society "tending-towards" a particular state or evolution. Ideologies imply absences; ideologies create them. Consider for a moment the long lines of refugees across the earth, people on the move, people elsewhere, people who do not fit in. These contradictions (predictions, analyses, versus existing conditions) do not admit of dialectical solution: they exist as contradictions.

Recognition of this, the world of the dead, is recognition of a certain responsibility in our art, our life-world activity, our beliefs. Can one conceive of both a set of beliefs and their neutralization? Only through the presence of both — belief and disbelief, function and dysfunctionality, can one respond, freely, to the world.

I continue with a sketch of the difficulties I have with the Marxist viewpoint (in response to this panel), and end with some prescriptions concerning the manufacture of works of art.

The three major sources used in the following discussion are Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*, Graham, *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union*, and

Kirschenmann, *Information and Reflection*. Marxist epistemology, centered in Engel's *Dialectics of Nature* (also his Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of the Classical German Philosophy and Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*), stresses a system which is best interpretable in terms of binary or many valued logics, a system grounded in the "objectivity" of the material world. It is, however, becoming increasingly evident today that these logics must be replaced by threshold logics (which do involve a transition from quantity to quality) and fuzzy set theory (in which membership may be an indeterminate function). Furthermore, through the advent of cybernetics, artificial intelligence and the like, knowledge itself is seen as procedural, an a priori interpenetration of theory and practice. All of these new areas of discourse (which are diligently pursued in the Soviet Union, as well as the late-capitalist countries) operate on a level of dynamic abstraction which is hard (but not impossible) to reconcile with materialism. Arguments from both quantum mechanics and cosmology enter the picture: what is the "objectivity" of black-hole matter? what is one to make of consciousness as an irreducible construct influential on the behaviour of fundamental particles, such as appears in the theories of de Beauregard and Wigner? All of these areas, it seems, shake the epistemological foundations of Marxism (considered as dialectical materialism), the doctrine

of reflection ("irritability of matter") notwithstanding.

One may replace Marxism with a truncated version, leaving "the hard sciences to the hard sciences," operating only on the level of the social, cultural, political, and economic life-world. But without foundations, Marxism becomes heuristics only. (Consider for example, a transformation within Marxism from a textually-grounded ideology based on the corpus to an ideology of procedures — the programmatic basis would be lost, and it would be — not a matter for a conference such as this one — but one tool among others for social and political equality on an individual and societal level.)

This consideration, however, overlooks the messianic tendency of Marxism, which — strangely enough for a materialist science — leads to the acceptance of a theoretically non-falsifiable teleology, based on the interpretation of historical "evidence." For the life-sciences, Heisenberg's principle of indeterminism must be rewritten: "the subjectivity of the observer interferes with the reception of the thing observed" — in fact, "the ideology of the observer appropriates the observed." Marxism as an "ideology of procedures" would still be Marxism, even in truncated form, since its organization could then proceed (as it often does in practice) from a



'These contradictions ... do not admit a dialectical solution: they exist as contradictions'



transcendental mechanism steering from above and equated with messianic practices. In fact, these practices are almost always **more productive of alienation** than the bourgeois society they counteract, since they "permit" the employment of terrorism and violence on a large scale without the activation of an internalized ("psychological") retribution. Consider activities under Stalin or Pol Pot. It must be noted that such practices are not endemic to a messianic Marxism in particular; they are found whenever ideology is equivalent to steerage, i.e. whenever ideology assumes the function of the superego from above, and libido from below.

The practice and world-views (if I may be permitted the term) of both communist and late-capitalist regimes are based on appropriation, and a tokenization (the self as quantity for the self). The numbering of prisoners within the Soviet Gulag has its parallels in the return to a tokenized "naturalism" in the West (i.e. "the newer, more natural, you" — i.e. "The Face is Yours, The Felling is Camay") — a different kind of slavery, a different kind of discourse. Appropriation, tokenization, reification, and so forth, are all based on **functionality**, usage: instead of an idealism, preservation of the thing-in-itself i.e. necessity of independence, etc. we have the thing-for-one — concept of "the language of things," or "back to the things themselves" is forgotten.

Or, in a sense, replaced, by the concept of the liber naturae, the book of nature — whose author, displaced from death, becomes an internal and necessary structuration centered on automorphisms and more generalized principles of symmetry. The liber implies a text; the texts of Marxism are placed in a parallelism with the texts of nature; man and woman are at one with the world.

Aesthetically, this is paralleled by attacks on "art for art's sake."

A major text here is Gyorgii Plekhanov's *On Art for Art's Sake*, which has been widely reprinted. Some quotes: "The tendency toward art for art's sake arises and develops where an insoluble contradiction exists between the artist and his social environment." "Why should any man having no interest in society and the struggle raging within it, assume the role of chronicler of that social struggle? Everything about it would bore him to distraction. If he happens to be an artist he will not even mention it in his work: he will give himself over to the 'sole reality,' his own ego. And since his ego may weary of its own company, he will invent for it a world of fantasy, high above the earth and all mundane matters. This is exactly what many artists do today." In this quote, and in many of the earlier texts of Marxism, struggle is binary. As opposed to this, I develop the notion of a situation, defined as a locale in which truth functions may not be defined; struggle, today, is no longer a series or even **matrix** of events — it is a situation bounded by fuzzy set membership functions, governed by fuzzy threshold logics, etc. This analysis grants art for art's sake a positive function outside the socio-cultural micro-arena of its creation; see below.

It is possible, however, to develop a **Phenomenology of approach** which takes for granted the autonomy of the natural world, while stressing its interconnectedness. This phenomenology utilizes concepts such as "domains of discourse" — which may or may not be closed, "the recession of the world in the face of analysis," and so forth. Simultaneously, it deals with appropriation and autonomy; with aesthetics, it stresses both functionality and dysfunctionality.



"The abandonment of prescriptive measures....may result in a more positive role for the artist,"

Diamat and late capitalism, through their stress on functionality, consider all things, all relations (such as art, the Dead Sea, the population of Georgia) as utilities. **They serve.** Function becomes problematic only in art and art-related areas. Far from "art for art's sake" being, **necessarily**, a retreat — it may also posit an opposition to appropriation of any kind, a most positive **function**, given the anonymous/oppressive conditions of industrialized societies in general. All this is ideal, however; **in reality**, artists more often than not succumb to the prescriptive measures of this micro-worlds. "Art for art's sake" within a Soho context is meaningless (as is the context itself). The problem is one of audience.

Or, rather, Soho in its entirety serves as a convenience for culture: the regime of the outrage, prescribed within an economically subverting perimeter. In other words, a token.

The abandonment of prescriptive measures (the abandonment of the procedures of traditional art-school education to some extent) may result in a more positive role for the artist than that of either an opposition to appropriation or creator of the unique object in a mechanized world.

At one point, I worked on a theory of the latter, involving the notion of crafted presence — the existence of a thing which was worked-on, to the micro-level (i.e. within a dense semiotics, to borrow from Eco), within a continuous branching matrix of choice. These **things would** subvert (i.e. tendency to heal) procedures of alienation, quantification, etc. were it not, paradoxically, for their limited distribution! If art is to function fully in terms of social purpose, it seems to me, it **must** involve available information-media in one form or another.

This role is based on the theoretical ability of art of be **non-methodological** (meta-methodological, if you will), **transcendent**, **integrative** and **investigative**: non-methodological: The core of art in the so-called "popular" mind is still personal freedom, the ability to choose (Marxist determinism notwithstanding). Freedom, through an existential twist, demands responsibility: an engaged art, opening-up the domains.

**Transcendent**: Not in any metaphysical sense. The transcendence of art is based on the dysfunctionality of the proposition "art for art's sake," as well as on the non-methodological approach. Transcendent may be just another word for "interdisciplinary," given a de-structuration of the disciplines themselves.

**Integrative**: The destructive/absurdist tendency of much of Western avant-garde work is to be deplored: a confirmation of social anomie or pornography (conditions **felt** implicitly and explicitly by large portions of the population) does nothing — in the long run becomes part of the problem. A call to social, psychological, political, philosophical, etc. activism is more useful. Perhaps the "representation of fragmentation" should be replaced by the "representation of representation" — a level in which some degree of coherence might still be possible.

**Investigative**: I place art on the perimeter of culture, delineating the edge-phenomena of society. Circumscription, the circumscription of circumscription, and so forth — eventually, through extrapolation, the hermeneutic circle of interpretations of interpretations must be broken. This does not require a philosophical exegesis, but simply a withdrawal in practice.

Art, and any other life-world activities today, continues under an unimaginable threat of annihilation. The shadows of the death camps, from whatever war, whatever country, are long indeed; they threaten to overtake us at every step of the way. Behind every corner the dead lie — ourselves, or others, our children, if not our parents.

The reasons for this are so obvious that they become painfully transparent. Art and our other activities, including the raising of children, become hopelessly meaningless in the face of the death camps. But the ideologies (Marxist and Capitalist) that have created the possibilities of autonomous technologies and destructions are based on materiality and quantification, appropriation and function. Art alone possesses the ability to operate out of a tautology (art — art) that corresponds to a **mute symbol**, a **null set**, a point, if you will, in opposition. Or, if not in opposition, at least adjacent to. The only **useless** regime



womankind and mankind have left. And therein lies its function...

Thank you.

Upon rereading, re-analysis of the above, two points, it seems, are omitted: a. The use of art in terms of large-scale modelling, i.e. providing coherency within the life-world; b. The relation or lack of it between Marxist analysis and certain traditional world-views — I am thinking of the Pima/Papago concept of him'dag, "way," which is a key term in the theory of shamanism (see the writings of Donald Bahr). Him'dag is based on the idea of autonomous non-material life-worlds — for example, there is the "way of the eagle," "way of the mountain," and so forth. Transgression against one of these may result in a "staying sickness," which can only be cured by specific rites. The interior of the him'dag may well be "unknowable" — its symptomology of a human is based solely on contingencies. Transgression is rarely wilful and one behaves with propriety. There is obviously a close alliance between him'dag and independence, which is paralleled by contemporary anthropological theory. The Marxist viewpoint, on the other hand, creates an initial analysis (which knows no limits) based on socio-economic, quantifiable considerations. This viewpoint — like the viewpoint of capitalist mercantilism (which resulted, perhaps, in the cargo cults) — is damaging to traditional societies in the extreme. In all of these instances, if it were not for the presence of considerable technological apparatus, the confinements of power, the violence of the procedures of the acquisition of information...

The following are a series of notes which contributed to the statement; they may be of value.

(In relation to the Theses of Feuerbach) "Thinking is practice; an internal reorganization of the world is necessary in order to avoid the inactivity of neurosis." Neurosis is located at the interstice between framework and distinction, this merging into that.

Thought is process: accumulation, assimilation: Thought is procedure: recession of structure. (Recession of the current work in artificial intelligence: see for example Terry Winograd, *Understanding Natural Language*) The recession of structure — the reflective quality of matter (i.e. Lenin, Plekhanov) leads to a recession of organization, postulations of duality, the discrete.

"Contextualized existence before essence: The resolution of the non-fixity of objects within shifting frameworks. Revolutionary practice becomes the ability to shift frameworks against frameworks, affecting the transformations of consciousness. The labor of knowledge. Interpretation is implicit in change; change must be implicit in interpretation." "The abstract, in its embodied structurations (religion, cybernetics, locales as phenomenological horizons) is neither theory nor practice, but process dislocated ontologically from both consciousness and materiality."

The problematic of a textural, textual ideology is the problem of independence, polarization: this against that, this grounding that. A Hope Marxist is a contradiction in things.

The dialectic reduces to difference; listen to Engels: "The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa; The law of the interpenetration of oppositions; The law of the negation of the negation." Again, as with the text, this against that. Consider the notion of distinction, its appearance in the Sheller stroke of the propositional calculus — appearance within the vocabulary of the grammar of our language, an object does this, does that, noun postulated against verb: implications of the divisibility of time and space: **distinction**: the de-contextualized object.

The analysis of capitalism itself is a decontextualization: embedded within the problem of alienation.

The artwork disappears in the absence of a framework; the result is a singularity in the topology of culture, a black hole collapse which draws the context against itself. The work hastens to this end through its developments as self-referential sphere of discourse.

A work of art, therefore, as a machine, barren of discourse, which presents a discourse not its own, which lays bare (barren) its own structure, which permits appetite of an external world: ...a neutral

window, which functions as a global pattern recognizer, interpreter, theorizer, a machine proffering an activated mirror, an extension, differentiation, of junctures, a machine embedded in the interstices of the landscape, periscopal, in which ideologies are generated and reproduced, in which the natural re-fabricates itself — a machine in which anomalies appear as singularities within the exhausted topography of the world, in which the flesh of the earth heals itself through the fluids of innumerable orifices...

The machine which bars, frames and bars: a gesture pointing towards a wall, the collapse of the wave-equation into a singular, reducible, token: the perimeter of culture, increasingly illegible...

One carries this machine against that one, this desire against that: flesh against flesh, as if possession (pattern of thrusting an ownership, demarcation into the world of shared markers) defined not an horizon — the horizon, an autonomous structure whose dyads encompass the Poles, exemplify both universal and null sets coextensive with "reality."

...the disjuncture of art leading to transcendence, the edge-phenomena of culture leading to investigation, and the resulting social disjuncture leading to (re)integration...

...thus there are two arts, two histories: that which encompasses, contains its relations, and that which separates through an insistence on intended meanings in the world...

Given a text X which bifurcates, divides at each conceivable instant, which structures, deconstructs, locates, gives way to: a text which clarifies, denies: it becomes an organism of discourse, a moment of cognition, it becomes the thing itself. The exfoliation of the ideological text ensures its survival within any possible life-world: One can, after all, hold onto a particular theory: only economy is sacrificed.

A Marxist econometrics allies itself with distinction, the opposite of a phenomenological Marxism which stands as the delineation of the life-worlds of late-capitalism, quantifications, reification... It demands its presence (that of stratifications, alienations) in terms of an autonomous economic body which results in a fourth psychoanalytical entity, "the economic" contingent upon ego, libido, superego. Guattari and Deleuze extend this horizon, socio-economic and sexual flow are allied in the manner of bloods flowing from a single wound.

**This horizon, which is here and which is there.**

(In terms of independence vis-a-vis him'dag etc.) It may well be a fundamental rule of reality that (within the limits of the quantum or cosmological formalisms) independent transformations exist. These are not only based on nearly-decomposable hierarchies, or physical considerations, but also on the retention of independent phenomenological horizons of individuals: Does the left hand know what the right hand is doing? This is not an argument for radical individuation; independence cannot be equated with complete unknowability. But it is an argument for the existence of the individual cipher, the mute symbol, the territoriality of the ego after all.

An inverse (one among many) of independence is appropriation, value in terms of possession, a remercization of land and resources. In this respect a geometrized Marxism might prove valuable. In an article, "The Territory of the Object," I argued for the presence of paraboliations within culture — the example pertaining to economics was based on a hand-axe passing through three stages: its formal function as body extension (tacit knowledge, and so forth); its tokenization as a result of trade; and its re-entrance as body extension in terms of tokenization. This last also results in a tokenization of the body, the body as quantified unit for both selves and others. (One must remember that traditional societies — more than our own — place what are seen externally as severe limitations upon the structuration of the self in terms of the life-world.) The tokenized body as commodity becomes a thing-for-selves, and returns to "the self" (which has been effectively deterritorialized and fragmented in the process) as "natural" — witness the advertisements for the natural you which involve the placement of transparent symmetricizing skin upon the body — body as synthetic skin — or the concepts embodied in the lessons of Lamaze, "natural" childbirth. Consider then a Marxism which analyzes simply the geometry of culture — the topography of

the perimeter of the body in terms of commodity fetishisms, a topography which takes into account scripts (role, action, and state assignments) and frameworks ("global" semantic units) — a Marxism whose concept of the economic extends even to the level of particle physics or psychoanalytics (see Brillouin, Freud)...

The limits of Marxism: the invasion of the machine, image as machine. (Consider in opposition, the analysis of the machine in Capital I.) Consider the cargo cults, Navajo pictorial weaving, the cases of the Pueblo potters Maria Martinez and Nampeyo, whose early histories were related to Anglo processes of Pueblo cultural reconstitution: These are instances interpretable in terms of the machine, literal movement of lever against lever: or an object lying there, in the sand, in the sun: a system of irreducible cultural washes. "We tend to identify object with function, which assumes that the object is equated with its properties — and its properties are revealed through technological intervention: exploitation and development." The natural extension of the ultimate alienation, tokenization of the body, is not a particular work ethos, but a stage in technological development which is dependent upon labor as steerage — an extension culminating in the great Soviet prison camp system. The movement of the machine, cargo, into the jungle, is the movement of the potential employment of manual labor: extraction and appropriation of materials in a materialist environment. Manipulation and an employed Marxism may be identical.

Consider the possibility of a contraction in terms, a natural hermeneutics whose goal is to interpret the world as text, while recognizing the author as projection... This hermeneutics is related to an "outlaw intellectualism," a rather transcendent category resulting in **samizdat** and the absence of methodologies — back, somehow, into the world or art, but an art with an extended distribution system... The outlaw intellectual retains and interprets... a consciousness of alinity which is postulated in every framework — "the implication of the existence of a culture with specific and active techniques of transmission and deflection — techniques that depend upon the function of the Signal and Signal resonances." Of course, such a hermeneutics, similarly with a geometrized Marxism, must take into account the destructuring tendencies of semiotics and structuralist analysis, as well as the symmetry and categorical principles of the resulting locale-schema. The question becomes one of appropriation in a peculiarly intellectual fashion: the denudation of the environment in terms of observer-scripts, based upon splittage. Is the steerage that results a body co-extensive with the locale?

Analysis of the Image: "The Image is placed: operates — is perceived. It possesses the form of orthogonality; it contains. The content appears to refer; the content is circumscribed by history. The Image does not "have" interior; it is Interior. The Image disappears into its own Mirror: No longer formulations of the Ego, its result is the dissolution of the Self — the social Self which extends back into what appears to the Individual as the coherent Text of his consciousness. The Mirror (of the mirror image stage) is a Wash which carries content as Projection from the dissolved world. The Word lies like a cloth upon cloth: entities are stratifications, layers and weavings. The things and their appearance shine; the things Function. One cannot, after all, utilize the Projection of a camera for the reproduction of the locale; the Expulsion, object itself, is necessary."

One begins with the stance of reification: the gallery, the museum, all modes, networks of local distribution, profits, statements of a meagre capitalism. Soho and other centers result from image proliferation to the extent of prescription of anomalies and their immediate tokenization; in the words of Baretta, "You're dead, man. You don't see nothing anymore." This becomes that, and through that, becomes this. Cannot it become, once again, for and within a kind of refusal, an instance of the placement of an object in a locale — an engaged object, an engaging object? A thing which possesses its own disappearance: as if: in the midst of an outraged crowd; as if: where was its origin; and what was its message: as if: structure: this one or that one; or at least: coherence, a thing itself and everything else, at one, one and the same time: an abstraction of prose, particles, a location or a floating model; exhaustion like the placement of this sentence, words against words, transforming into letters and the token of the page.

"There is no body, the body is an object."





# SCHOOL FOR MARXIST EDUCATION: APRIL-MAY-JUNE LECTURES 8pm

186 West 4th Street (4th Floor), New York, New York 10014. tel. 212-989-6493.

## TUESDAY

### REVOLUTION & GRADUALISM IN EARTH HISTORY & HUMAN HISTORY

Shane Mage April 18

This author of a book on Marx's law of the declining rate of profit upholds the views of Velikovsky which emphasize catastrophes in explaining geological and historical occurrences and challenge the uniformitarian orthodoxy of most modern geologists.

### THE ISRAELI LEFT

David Mandel April 25

A close observer goes behind the headlines to a society rent with class and ethnic contradictions, where the traditional labor movement is disintegrating and a few small left groups are organizing a new opposition.

### THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY SYSTEM: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CURRENT CRISIS

Harry Magdoff May 2

### DOES PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST MEAN WAR IN BLACK AFRICA?

Charlotte Dennett May 9

A look by an eyewitness journalist at U.S. attempts to forge new alliances and crush radicalism in this strategic part of the world.

### SOCIALIST PUBLICATIONS: A Panel Organized by Jim Paul

May 16

Bobbie Ortiz, editor of *Monthly Review* and representatives of *7 Days*, *Science and Society*, and *MERIP Reports* will discuss: the historical origins and conception of their publication -- nuts and bolts of Left publishing -- organization, finance, distribution -- how the publication relates to the Left and workers' movement.

### THE SOVIET ECONOMY TODAY

Alexander Erlich May 23

Breakdown or crisis? Recent information, including the CIA *Report on Soviet Economy*, will be analyzed by this noted scholar.

### THE NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION A Panel Speakers to be announced

May 30

### ON THE NATURE OF THE PERIOD

Arthur Felsnerbaum June 6

We will discuss: (1) the Communist International's assessments of the period (1919-22); (2) the question of long waves; (3) errors in Marxist analysis of the Post-World War II period; (4) toward a realistic understanding of the present conjuncture.

### LESSONS OF CURRENT WOMEN'S STRUGGLES

June 13

A Panel Discussion with Meredith Tax of CARASA and a member of the *Marxist Education Collective*.

### NEO-COLONIALISM AND THE CARIBBEAN

June 20

A panel moderated by Luis Prado.

### ROSA LUXEMBURG & MARX

Mary Boger June 27

## WEDNESDAY

### LABOR & THE CITY CRISIS

This series will show how all of our futures whether public or private employees, union or non-union, blue collar or white collar -- are in some respects tied to the fortunes of NYC workers in the current period.

### AFTER TRANSIT. WHAT NEXT FOR NYC UNIONS?

Marty Rosenblatt May 3

### PERSPECTIVES ON THE FIGHT BACK -- A PANEL

May 17

A Co-op City rent strike leader, an activist in the struggle to keep Hostos Community College open and a fighter for the People's Firehouse in Northside, Brooklyn, will discuss their relative success in staving off attacks on their respective communities.

### HOUSING & THE WORK FORCE

Bill Price May 24

This United Tenants Association activist connects lack of employment and lack of housing, as well as capitalist plans for housing the "new work force" and discarding old housing for "obsolescent workers."

### THE BUREAUCRACY & THE BANKS

David Beasley May 31

The former president of Local 1930, the Library Guild of DC 37, will relate his experiences in fighting the banks and Victor Gotbaum during the first austerity days in 1975.

### SOCIOBIOLOGY: MYTH & REALITY

Eleanor Leacock May 10

A Marxist anthropologist debunks the "immutable human nature" apology of the bourgeoisie for racism & oppression which masquerades as science.

### REVOLUTIONISTS I HAVE KNOWN

Carl Cowl June 7

This co-founder of the Communist Party and other organizations discusses significant individuals who have affected the development of the movement in the U.S., 1919 to date.

## THURSDAY

### THE BAKKE DECISION: TOWARD A UNITED FIGHTBACK

Hubert Hammond April 20

The movement against the Bakke decision is the first sustained national fightback by Blacks, women, gays and labor to defend the working class' gains of two decades. What are its consequences for socialist politics in the U.S.?

### WORLD REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS: 1945-49

David Slavin April 27

Focusing on China, France & Italy, we will discuss why Asian Communists succeeded in seizing state power while the Western European revolution arrived stillborn.

### MARXISM & POLITICAL ECONOMY

#### THE MAKING OF MARX'S CAPITAL May 4

Anwar Shaikh discusses this newly translated key work on the development of Marx's analysis by Polish theorist Roman Rosdolsky.

#### MARXIAN POLITICAL ECONOMY May 11

James Becker discusses his new book (Cambridge University Press, 1977).

### THE RESURGENCE OF MARXIST THEORY IN JAPAN -- THE UNO SCHOOL

Makoto Itoh May 18

The Uno School's elaboration and application of Marx's theory of value & crisis to contemporary Japanese capitalism & left politics will be discussed.

### WHAT'S WRONG WITH RADICAL ECONOMICS?

May 25

Robert Fitch, author of *Planning New York* and former editor of *Ramparts*.

### WOMEN READING

May 24 (Wednesday)

Grace Paley, Sybil Claibourne & Joan Durant read from their short stories.

June 1 Thursday

Martha Schlamme, Weill/Brecht singer and actress -- POETRY BY, FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

June 8

Annette Rubinstein -- AMERICAN WOMEN POETS

(Dr. Rubinstein, Marxist literary critic, says the first and the best American poets were women)

June 15

Martha Kearns, poet & biographer of *Kathe Kollwitz* -- HER OWN AND SUSAN SAXE'S POEMS

June 22

Alix Kates Shulman -- BURNING QUESTIONS In one of the finest novels of the Women's movement in our era, Ms. Shulman raises the questions we all face as women revolutionaries

June 29

Helen Sobell -- POEMS OF PASSION AND POLITICS, stemming from her long life of struggle & activity on behalf of justice.

## FRI - SAT - SUN

### A GET TOGETHER FOR SCHOOL

PARTICIPANTS -- Music & Refreshments Saturday April 22 8PM

### MAY DAY MOVIE -- EUGENE DEBS & THE AMERICAN MOVEMENT

Friday & Saturday, April 28 & 29 -- 7:30PM Sunday, April 30 -- 4PM

Founding the American Railway Union in 1893, leading Pullman workers & supporters to the verge of a nationwide general strike, reading *Capital* in jail and moving from Democrat to Populist to Socialist, jailed again for sedition in opposing World War I... the life of Eugene Debs epitomizes a period of the American working class movement. Will be followed by discussions with labor historians.

### WHAT IS SOCIALIST PEDAGOGY? -- A Panel with Bertell Ollman & others

May 12 Friday

This panel is part of the SME series on "Educating the Educators: Lessons of Socialist Education," and celebrates the publication of *Bertell Ollman's* anthology on this subject by *Monthly Review Press*.

### SALT OF THE EARTH -- Special Film Showing For Children

May 13 2PM Saturday

Recreating a strike by Chicano miners, with its real-life participants as well as actors, this movie shows the essentiality of the fight against sexism amidst a struggle against the bosses. Organized by the Youth Committee of the SME.

### CONFERENCE ON U.S. WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

Friday Night, May 19

Saturday, May 20

Saturday morning and afternoon panel topics include: "Working Class Consciousness and Capitalist Culture;" "The Making of the American Working Class in the Historical Process of U.S. Capital Accumulation;" "The Status of the Labor Movement Today." Keynote speaker Friday night to be announced.

### MOVIE -- BLOW FOR BLOW (1972)

Friday & Saturday, June 2 & 3, 7:30PM

A dramatized reconstruction of the strike and occupation by women workers of a French textile factory in the late '60's

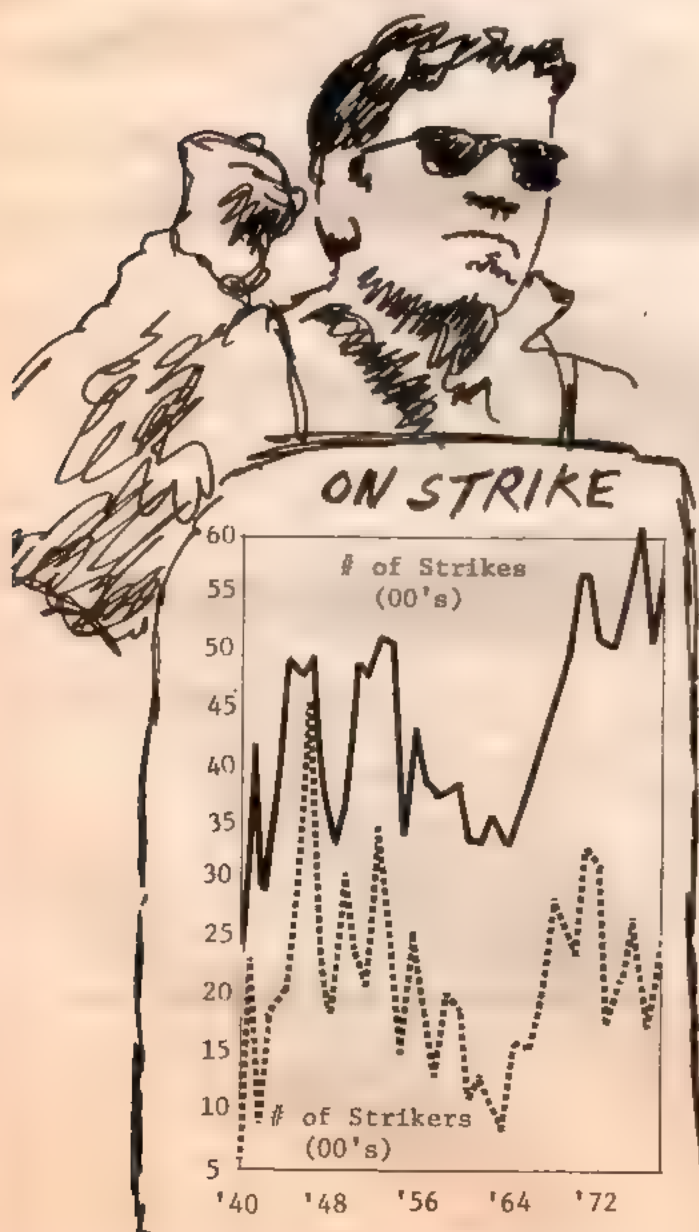
### THE AMERICAN NEW LEFT & THE WORKING CLASS

Philip Foner June 16 Friday

### WOMEN, LABOR & FAMILY LIFE

Joan B. Landes To Be Announced

Joan B. Landes is a teacher of social science & a writer.





## Peter Dunn and Loraine Leeson

Here the problem of context becomes crucial. The theoretical questioning and politicised practices which expose the ideological underpinning of art's social function are both necessary and valuable. The question is, should they remain as an internal dialogue within the contained social territory of the art-network, anti-capitalist or "political" content is easily subsumed under the old bohemian myth — the bourgeoisie love to be teased by their artists, especially if such artists comply with the role/concept/context of art formed by bourgeois society. Further, the projection of "radical identity" upon such artists adds more fuel to the personality cultism (*enfant terrible* image) necessary to the fetish of the "new model" which is essential to the regeneration cycle of the art market. If utopian idealism is to be avoided, however, the artist must begin the struggle from the pragmatic of present conditions — start from "one's own position". But what does this mean? The activity of "putting one's own house in order" may go on indefinitely without contact with one's neighbours — it only has limited credibility in terms of its duration and future intent. "Gallery Socialism" is not enough and it cannot be justified as the "sad contradiction of the bourgeois

Since the kind of society and the kind of art we seek does not yet exist, are we then discussing 'pure' ideological speculation unrelated to material conditions — utopian idealism? Not necessarily.

Whilst it is necessary that the 'Art network' be engaged in order to contribute to the internal questioning and shifting of the parameters which constitute the proposition 'Art' and its function, exclusive operation within this framework is not only in contradiction to the aims, but on a practical level inhibits the development of such a practice. It must be developed outside this network. Further, since we are faced with such powerful and monopolistic forces, anti-capitalist cultural production which is (structurally) consumer orientated is forced to compete with bourgeois culture on its terms. With the odds stacked against it, it joins the many 'alternative' products offered for consumption. It is necessary, therefore, to side step such direct competition — to shift the mode of struggle. The





aim is not to seek a wider range of consumers for 'radical culture' but to generate radical producers.

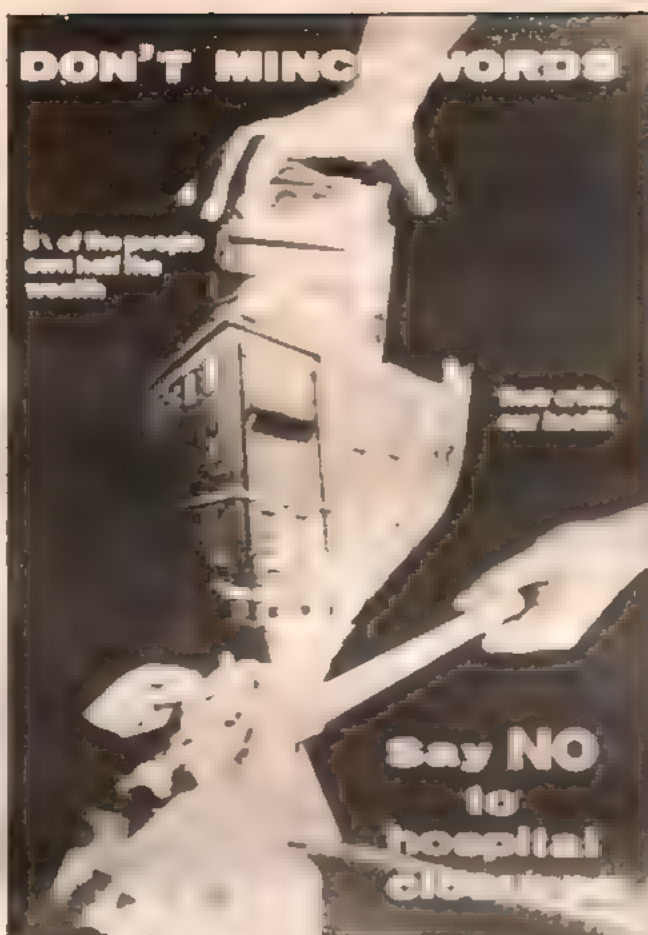
This requires that the barrier between producer and consumer is broken down and this cannot be achieved by the actions of the individual artist or even a group of artists. It requires a difference in attitude by society as a whole to its culture. Given present conditions, the extent to which such a concept can be extended in practice is severely limited. It requires involvement, and certainly to ask people to 'participate' in investigating an artist's individual 'art concerns' is the most superficial of such approaches. If the work involves both artist and public in a joint endeavour focused upon immediate (even localised) social and cultural experience of common importance to them both, then it may at least provide a reciprocal learning process with the possibility of transforming the situation. It may also act as a springboard for situating this experience within a wider context. This, at least, is a beginning.

Struggle is inevitable if society is to be transformed, and there are many ways and many levels upon which this can take place, many forms it may take. The struggle on a cultural level may differ from that which takes place on a material level but there are occasions when the two become dynamically fused. The more urgent the struggle becomes the more radically it will transform the social relations of those engaged. People united in a common cause will quickly break down old barriers, many skills will be drawn toward a common aim and new ones will be developed. The urgency of the moment will strip away all superfluous preconceptions of 'taste' and open up new possibilities unperceived by mere intellectual speculation.

Work in support the Bethnal Green Hospital Campaign

We make no claims of having resolved all of the problems raised in the above text. Rather, these have been formulated as a result of contradictions arising from work we have been engaged in over the last few years, and from issues raised in the theory and practice of others striving for largely similar aims

The work presented in this show was not instigated with any view to it being exhibited in an art gallery. It represents work we are currently engaged in at Bethnal Green for the campaign to save its hospital



and it is within this context where we regard it as engaging its primary function. Some of the material has already been used in this context, some of it is work in progress which is being developed for more long term use as a resource. It falls basically into two categories: that produced for use directly as tools to enlist support for the campaign — the active outgoing element; and that being produced to document the continuing experience of the struggle as it progresses — the reflective element. These two elements, however, are not to be seen as operating independently but as dialectically linked and acting upon each other within the context of the campaign.

'Emergency' is a video work made with the help of the campaign committee and others closely involved in the campaign as a means of enlisting support. It is being shown in the area mainly to tenants groups, trades unions, in community halls, factories etc. Its use, as video, is for showing at gatherings and groups already formed into organised or coherent units, usually in conjunction with a speaker from the campaign committee.

The posters are aimed at a more general audience to continue the impetus at street level and in this sense they are a back-up to the marches and demonstrations organised by the campaign.

The selections from the resource material show aspects of a work engaged on a fairly detailed documentation and analysis of the campaign: following its strategies, tactics, the successes and pitfalls, the reaction of the authorities, their ploys of opposition, dirty tricks etc. Some of this material, cannot be made public whilst the campaign is still in progress since it might pre-empt situations still in state of uncertainty. It will include contributions from other campaigns and will be situated within a social and political analysis wider than those concerned with the immediate action necessary to one campaign. Though it must be stated that no campaign of this sort can, or indeed does, work in isolation. It is hoped that this resource can be used as a reflective agent within the campaign at Bethnal Green and be of use to others faced with similar circumstances. However, we are not alone in thinking along these lines — many of those already involved in fights against the health cuts, and more particularly the health workers engaged in the forefront of this struggle, are joining forces and sharing useful information. We see this work as being a part of that process rather than initiating it or pioneering it in any way. Certain information at the right moment can be vital and the monopoly of information by the authorities is a major factor in their favour in the first instance. But the more they attack, the more those who are defending learn about their strategies — then defence turns into offensive. Once the authorities begin openly to transgress their own codes of 'acceptable' conduct, once the media in their 'impartiality' have ignored or played down these transgressions until they can do so no longer without losing credibility — then the turning point has been reached.

It is the work of many which achieves such results. The means of organisation and communication need to be developed on numerous different levels — the visual is one of the many.





# The Group

Tony Rickaby

Those who express confidence in the basic honesty and goodness of the working class tend to belong to the creative bourgeoisie, whose social conscience is less oriented to the achievement of material rewards than to a concern with moral or humanitarian issues. Such concerns are intrinsically different from those of other social classes or groups in that the benefits are felt to accrue to others, or to society as a whole, rather than specifically to oneself. The main reward lies in the emotional satisfaction gained from the expression of personal values in protesting against moral injustice.

I feel cut off from reality: the lives of other people. One remedy for this unattachedness, or alienation, is affiliation with the working class. The conflict between my requirement of meaningfulness and the empirical realities of the world and its institutions in which I must conduct my life is responsible for my flight from the world and to the working class — supposedly a people untouched by social conventions. My individuality is hard to bear, and my fear of freedom and selfhood underlies my wish for submergence in the mass.

I am unable to attach myself to a class to which I do not belong because of members of my social grouping are in a unique position to choose their affiliations and to adapt themselves to any viewpoint; whilst those who are immediately bound by class membership are rarely able to transcend the restrictions of their class outlook. There is tension in my position in that my sympathies do not

lie with my own class; but my enthusiasm for the working class does not free me from the distrust of the members of that class, for my assimilability into an outside class is limited by the psychic and social characteristics of my own. My desire to share the mental and emotional experience of others is thwarted by a sense of being different, whether by reason of occupation, education or the possession of attitudes and beliefs contrary to theirs. Whilst believing that everyone can be made as eminent as myself, I maintain the standard bourgeois attitude towards the working class, which is one of superiority, no matter how qualified. I do not regard the working class contribution to society highly.

I have a strong propensity to shed and oppose my former beliefs and way of life. A number and variety of symbolic mechanisms are available to me to do this. By exhibiting the appropriate symbolic attitudes I aim to convince others, as well as myself, that despite my occupation, education, manner, etc., I am not to be thought of as 'bourgeois'. Such mechanisms enable me to derive gratification and preservation of my self-respect by signalling to my peer group that 'this is not the real me'. At the same time I can fulfil my class obligations by not taking the drastic step of abandoning my middle-class status for one lower in the social order. A common mechanism is identification with a group which, in conventional bourgeois terms, is 'pariah' — for instance the working class — and which can be seen as noble and uncorrupted to the calculating and artificial bourgeoisie.

## The Proletariat

Capitalism instills in the bourgeoisie the yearning for competitive success, and so I strive for excellence and prestige. But whilst I need others to appreciate my creative performance, I exclude the public in my recognition of only the 'ideal' admirer or critic. My first supporters form a narrow circle which commands attention and attracts new members. Within this relatively autonomous intellectual field — which, by debarring the public, intensifies into an esoteric sect of mutual admiration — I can estimate my success and find social status and the approval of others.

The middle class tend to exercise greater discrimination in the choice of friends than the working class, the main criteria being equality of rank, compatibility of interests and shared standards of opinion and moral outlook. The selection of like-minded friends is one way of countering the social constraints towards conservatism in bourgeois society, and whilst my group is in conflict with the majority culture it develops its own peculiar norms, standards and traditions which distinguish its members from those outside.

Intellectual interchange encourages the evolution of certain shared assumptions amongst the creative bourgeoisie, which, although a recognisable and essentially middle-class group, is united more by culture and manners than by social and political attitudes, constituting a fraternity that holds together, especially when its self-esteem is endangered. This group affords me companionship, private satisfaction in its activities and in my uniqueness as an independent personality within it and, through the group's reputation, prestige. Members develop a strong *esprit de corps* and sense

of common social mission; friendships, shared ideals and success are likely to produce deep attachments. I am greatly influenced by how others in the group behave and by my relationship to them, resulting in my being more similar to them.

A key concern of the bourgeoisie is the defence of inequality, and a key concern of the creative bourgeoisie is the defence of an unequal, elitist culture. An elite is a minority group which has status within society and control over aspects of that society, although rather than directly controlling behaviour it may simply influence, or be imitated by, the non-elite. Its power adds to its attractiveness, and strong motivations towards belonging to the group enables it to exert a potent influence over its members and exacting pressures to conformity, which may result in the ostracism and exclusion of those who deviate from group norms. When a sufficient number of people possess the same opinion, the 'reality' of that opinion is established, a different opinion can be regarded as incorrect and it will be rejected, since its acceptance would mean rejecting 'social reality'. Members develop common attitudes and exhibit relative uniformity to specified opinions and modes of behaviour. Enforcement of these standards depends on subtle influences and indirect pressures, although these are often very powerful. Ethnocentrism — the attitude whereby one's own group is central and everything else is scaled and rated with reference to it — leads me to exaggerate and intensify all those things in my own group which differentiates it from others, consequently strengthening those differences.





# Political Radicalism

A group whose class position is fixed has its political view point already decided for it. Where this is not so, as with the social grouping to which I belong, there is a wider choice and a corresponding need for total orientation and synthesis.

Whilst the worker turns to radicalism in reaction to his social position, I turn to it in reaction to distress involving my intellectual life. My enthusiasm for radicalism compensates my lack of integration into a class and my dissatisfaction with a system which fails to reward creative talent. I benefit emotionally and psychologically rather than materially.

The inconsistencies in having a high education but a low social ranking cause my lack of a satisfactory social function and my having few or no psychological and / or cultural links with the wider community. I am thus highly vulnerable to the appeals of political radicalism, particularly when it has a messianic flavour or a strong moralistic appeal or when it favours direct action. The feeling that I am involved in some major activity (helping to change the course of history or the fate of the world) provides a sense of purpose and significance to my life. In joining with the enemies of the establishment I can find a place of honour and an ideal of social organization which has some of the characteristics (rationality, impartiality, zealousness and even other-worldliness of intellectual life itself. My tendency towards extremism/impossibilism is also due to the nature of mental work (which can be easily dissociated from reality), to the rootlessness of my values and to the vehemence of my emotions now that I am fighting my former class.

One course of action for me is to become a theorist or propagandist for a proletariat which I feel lacks the intellectual attributes necessary for political conflict. But unlike those I aspire to liberate, I have a position of privilege. I am a deviant, supporting attitudes contrary to my own class interest; and because I am thus regarded by my own class as apostate or fanatic, I set up rigid principles which justify my conduct.

Because my profession allows me less susceptibility to bureaucratic restraints, I am unable to translate my personal views into public stances, however unorthodox. Certain professions serve as 'sanctuaries' for the bourgeois radical in that they allow him to achieve a high degree of identification with his work without causing serious strain between his personal and occupational values. Such radicals tend towards creative professions and are rarely found in those occupations which appeal to their class as a whole and which have a high status within that class.

I would be expected to be attracted to radicalism. As a bourgeois individual, I find my economic position particularly marginal and precarious, forced as I generally am to offer my cultural products under market conditions and exposed to the frequent incompatibility between my aesthetic considerations and the often commercial or non-aesthetic considerations of the buyer or the audience. And also, under conditions where notoriety or 'having a name' increases the marketability of cultural products, public radicalism may offer me positive advantages.





# Ice Cream With Fidel OR Will They Love Me In Havana If I Wear Cuban Heels

an interview with Michael Perfecto-Garcia

*What did you go down for?*

I went to Cuba because I had never been there, I had never been to the Carribean, I had never been to Latin America. And I wanted to see what it was like. Cuba has a kind of mystery and fascination because not many people have gone there, and not many people have any insight as to what goes on there. I had some friends who were down there, who invited me to come down and who work for a Canadian company. So I went to visit them.

I got to spend time with tourists and with Cubans as well, and saw both aspects of that, because for most of us, the only way we can see Cuba, right now, is as a tourist, unless because of what we do we get invited down by the government — which doesn't happen very often.

Cubans are interested in tourism more than they are interested in foreigners...it's a way of getting hard currency; and that's their major interest in having foreigners come to Cuba right now.

*How did you feel you were being treated?*

I didn't like being processed as a tourist. That had never happened to me before. And I didn't like having my time organized in the frivolous way tourism is meant to organize people.

I spent three days at a beach resort, about two hours east of Havana, where most Canadians go, a place called Baradero. Just twenty-six miles of the most beautiful beach you can ever imagine. With little hotels and villas dotting the small strip of beach. Very quiet, very serene, but it's not very Cuban. People who work in the hotels are Cuban.

*O.K. Why don't you start by telling us about your meeting with Cuban people in Havana or non-resort places.*

The Cuban people that I met were very friendly, very helpful, were very proud about what they were doing in Cuba. It was as if everyone worked for the Ministry of Tourism and wanted people who were identified as being foreigners, to understand what they were doing in Cuba.

*Did you approach these people just by chance or...*

...Very often just by chance. A number of people I travelled with had a great deal of success in just walking into various Buros, and agencies, hospitals, clinics and day care centres; and just presenting themselves as interested foreigners — and would be taken on tours around — and let to see everything, let to photograph whatever they wanted to.

I was walking past a construction site, where they are building a large fountain to commemorate the world international anti-imperialist youth festival which is taking place in Cuba — and is really a point of pride with the Cuban people.

The only billboards you see, or almost the only ones you see, urge you to be an activist in the festival.

I was photographing this construction site, the fountain or youth it's called, and one of the workers came over to me, asking me what I was doing and where I was from.

I told them I was interested in taking photographs and so he invited me into the construction shed and unveiled a cardboard mock-up of what the fountain

would look like when it was finished, and invited me to take photographs — showed me architectural drawings — and wanted to know if I wanted to photograph them.

He was incredibly friendly and he was really proud of the fact that they were doing all the work there on the site. They have all the cement to mix with the gravel, all the forming equipment to make their own tubing for the conduits for the water and things like that. He seemed proud of what he was doing.

*Was he a middle-aged man or a young man?*

No, he must have been a guy of around 25 or so. There are a lot of young people in Cuba.

*Can you say anything about the comparison between the youth. I mean the kind of age group people in Cuba and the people that are the same age, say in Toronto. What kind of differences did you see between them?*

Cuba is obviously a much more unitary society, and a much less fragmented society than ours — in terms of a kind of popular culture and taste. There aren't people who stand out, as being outsiders from society the way they are here in Toronto.

You don't see freaks, you don't see hippies, you don't see disco queens, you don't see rubbies. You don't see poor people hanging around on the street. Everyone who wants to work has a job. That's their input to the system.

*Did you see any poverty, or signs of poverty?*

People live in a much lower level of materialism and consumerism than we do and a lot of the tourists who go down there interpret that as poverty. But the fact of people who have travelled in parts of Latin America told me that it's very different, that you don't see any kind of poverty that you see in Mexico, for example, or in South America.

*You were also saying that you don't seek freaks or disco queens. What do you mean by that? Because I'm not quite sure that I understand.*

O.K. For example, walking down the streets of Toronto, obviously you are walking in a number of different types of societies. People who take their information about ideas, styles, media, from different media. And Cubans are much more unitary in their goals as a society — and in their ideas, and in the kind of education that they have had. And the kind of orientation to the society than we are.

They are committed very much to unitary goals — maintaining, preserving and extending the Cuban Revolution and developing Cuban culture.

*So they still, or do believe in social/cultural revolution?*

...and they see themselves in the midst of a revolution that is happening all the time.

*Do they see any danger coming from the outside?*

Yes. And you are reminded all the time that the United States is only 90 miles away. The Cubans are very wary of the United States.

*But do they have flights from say Florida to Cuba?*

There aren't direct flights to Cuba. No. You still

have to go via Canada, although Americans can go to Cuba, they can get travel visas, but they have to come through Canada still. There are no commercial contacts in that sense.

*O.K. Now going back to the stereotypes, freaks and disco queens. It makes me wonder how they deal with the artist, because it seems that freaks sometimes might be the stereotype image of an artist from North America. And a disco queen might be a stereotype of a gay person. So how do they deal with these two aspects of art? Or the aspect of homosexuality?*

The art is part of the unitary culture. People take as a kind of bottom line, as the basic supposition for all the things that they are working on, that it advances the revolution. So there is not that combatist stance that art has in our culture. Because for their purposes, in keeping with their ideas and ideas that you can't make art outside the revolution. The state won't support you, and the people themselves won't be interested, that it's a self-defeating process.

Even if people were to try and do it the people would not be interested because the system is based on the idea that art comes from the people. That is you have a well educated people, and that is one of the prime goals of the revolution, to educate all the Cuban people to that level, so that literally anyone who has the inclination and the talent can become an artist. And that it couldn't possibly be a threat to the society because it comes out of a really deep understanding of that society.

*So it becomes a sort of full time job?*

It does become a full time job. I met some people who were musicians there, who were in effect employed by the government for the conservatory. In return for their salary, they were expected to spend 20 hours a week at the conservatory practicing music and using the facilities. They were expected to perform.

*What about the style of their art? How do they acquire new styles?*

That is something I don't understand. I think it's evolving. I didn't get to see a lot of what people were doing. The most interesting and exciting things for me visually were the things we have always been told are the best things the Cubans are doing anyway, which is poster work. And the stuff that I saw was really fine and they use it really fine — a lot of it out of doors. The only advertising you see is political advertising, and it is done very well. Bold colours, simple and effective designs, which sometimes cover entire buildings, they use a lot of colour in their architecture as well; so there is a nice graphic sense about Havana, that made it seem continuously interesting for me.

*Do you know if the decisions for the posters, or whatever, are made collectively or individually?*

I don't know. I would assume they are made collectively but with a certain political orientation. It seems to me that when you are in a society where you are trying to get very complex ideas across to them in a simple and most effective means, the use of poster art is one of the best things you can get into, for a kind of visual education of the public, as well as political education. So I would imagine that some of the people involved in poster art are some of the most politically committed people and that they would tend to make their decisions collectively, as





they interpret the needs of the revolution.

*Do you hear any sense of dissatisfaction with things in general?*

No, the only people I talked to in Cuba who were dissatisfied were the people still cured of the kinds of left-overs of materialism and consumerism that comes from the States. The only things that they would complain about are the lack of consumer goods. But they weren't serious complaints. They were more of a recognition of the kind of deprivation, which they see as essentially a good thing.

*Did you meet people who had the desire to go out of Cuba?*

I met a lot of people who had gone out of Cuba, who travelled especially to Eastern European Countries, with sports groups, youth groups or with education groups. There is a great deal of exchange between Eastern European cultures and Cuba — much more than there is in Western European and North American cultures.

The various socialist countries in Europe have friendship and culture houses, where they have exhibitions and displays to promote their cultures, and the airlines that service Havana are the Eastern European Airlines. So there is a constant communication...much more so than there is with North America.

*They would probably have a different monetary system. For instance, when we were in Poland there were two prices, one for foreigners and one for locals.*

It was the same in Cuba. You get a discount on all kinds of luxury goods, on drinks especially. The same bottle of rum that cost a tourist 3 pesos 90 in the hotel shop (about \$5 or so) cost the Cubans 20 pesos and that's about \$30 for a bottle of rum. You get an exchange slip, and everywhere you go as a foreigner you show them your exchange slip, and you get foreigner prices for everything.

*O.K. can we go back to the disco queen image and the difference of how they deal with that in Cuba.*

When I used the example of the disco queens and freaks, what I was trying to say is that people don't stand out on the street as obviously different. They don't use costume to manifest their differences from the masses. That is not a positive value to them, it's a negative value. Consequently there is not a lot of eye contact on the street either, which was different. The only Latin countries I had been in were in Europe, where there is a lot of eye contact on the street. And so, in Cuba as a foreigner, I felt almost invisible. People didn't go out of their way to notice me. If I wanted to talk to someone, they were quite amiable; and I would stop and ask directions and get involved in conversations. But no one stared at me, no one thought me unusual, even though my dress was dif-

ferent and I was obviously not a Cuban. That was a good feeling, as if the society could accommodate me, that I wasn't a threat to them.

*So are you saying that the costume of a person didn't say anything about the background of their work?*

You could tell who were manual labourers and who tended to be office workers and bureaucrats, because of the kinds of clothes they were wearing. But there didn't seem to be that great of a difference between the people there. You would occasionally see what my friend would call left-overs, old well-dressed people, driving a beautiful old car. He explained to me that they were usually people whose families have left Cuba. When the government took over, they were allowed to keep one house and one car. So a lot of them stayed and they live without servants in one big old house. They might have one silver Jaguar from the 50's which they drive around.

*Did you notice any patterns in their work? Did they work a lot or did they work little?*

The normal work day is from 8:30 in the morning until 12:30, when there is an hour's break for lunch. There isn't a siesta — very American in that sense. Then they work from 1:30 to 4:30 or 5:30 depending on the kind of business. Shops don't open until 12:30. There is such a thing as going shopping, but not in the morning because everyone is working.



STRIKE



# The New Bosses

The new dominant class, the technocracy, is defined in those activities in the area of intellectual work corresponding to the decisional function in the hierarchical division of social labour. The 'new bosses' perform this function from which they derive the relative privileges and power not from direct ownership of the means of production, but from the kind of intellectual ownership of the means of production, that is, the ownership of the knowledge related to the large economical and political systems. In its present most complete form of domination, as in the alleged socialist countries, the techno-bureaucrats manage as a monopoly the political and economical power and exercise their exploitation not as an individual task but as a dominant class collective possessing the means of production. They appropriate privileges, of material goods and services, not directly as in the capitalist economy, but indirectly through the government that include this privileged elite and re-distributes among its executives, following the hierarchical social pyramid in which they are places as executives.

In the late capitalistic modes of the western countries, the new bosses' hierarchical position is less noticable and their relationship to exploitation is entwined with the relationship to capitalist exploitation.

Bureaucrats (of governmental agencies) and technocrats (private monopoly managers) constitute two aspects of the new class. Technobureaucrats appropriate class privileges through high salaries, (such salaries in the private monopolies are possibly viewed economically as managerial profits). Salaries of government officers can be viewed as privileges over the produced wealth of the nation.

## THE LATE CAPITALIST STATE

The state performs a fundamental role in the late capitalist economy. The state directly or indirectly supervises a dense network of services of key importance. The state regulates, controls plans, co-ordinates in a growing manner of activities of enterprises through instruments of legislative, fiscal, and banking intervention. The state is also a major client of the private sector. The state intervention in the economy is not new for a capitalist economy, the state has assisted and supported capitalism throughout its development. However, the state support of the economical infrastructure and its wide development of services have changed the meaning of such intervention. The state, from a supporter of the capitalist structure, has become a privileged 'zone' for the formation of a dominant class, concentrating into itself the economical power that is merged into the political power as well. The political power loses its own role. In the recent formation of state controlled industry, the technocratic and bureaucratic class has been serving

the old system less and less and self-serving its own interests.

The majority of western countries have parliamentary governments, but in all of them there is no real-people government that governs the state. The state power is a permanent power. Such a power is exercised by a small number of semi-autonomous agencies. The governments come and go, but the state machine keeps on going. The state consists primarily of permanent and autonomous institutions: the army, the police, the ministries, the welfare offices, the magistracy, and so on; that is, institutions that are influenced by the polls, little influenced by the government and almost none by the parliament. Their executive power is continually strengthened. Each of these institutions are a minitization of the state hierarchy: from the top, the pyramid is exercising the decision making that the parliament 'represents' on the institutional/political stage. Such an evolution of political power is connected to the growing complexity of the late capitalist economy, from its tendency toward totalitarianism in its necessity to control completely all the newly born institutions within a vicious circle that develops specialization and a vast number of technocratic and bureaucratic power.

## THE POST CAPITALIST SOCIETY

In self-proclaimed socialist countries, there has been fully realized a post capitalist techno-bureaucracy. The evolution of a socialist state does not necessarily follow the socio-economical development of a capitalist system, indeed 'post capitalist' systems have often been structured in countries where the capitalist system was not completely realized with strong pre-capitalist economies, with some kind of affinity between the feudal social system and the technobureaucratic system. Among the post capitalist countries, we can distinguish three major models: the Russian one, the Chinese and Yugoslavian ones, differing among themselves and yet having a similar economical and social base. Yugoslavia retained self-governing elements, although compressed by state controls and entrepreneurial managements, China seems to follow a more decentralized development than Russia, with some kind of popular participation at the lower decisional levels with a greater balance between sectors and in the territory (country and cities), preserving less brutal and less violently repressed demarkation lines among the people, in a part attributed to the quasi-religious gregarious nature of their mass involvement. The precise data from China is still very scarce: insufficient to analyse with precision a system still 'young' and still in evolution, but sufficient for clarification and judgement. However we can indicate the class nature, its rigid hierarchy as structured by thirty well defined bureaucratic levels (of which the

first six are of a managerial kind), with an economical inequality that operates a salary 'fan' that includes a minimum and a maximum salary and a differentiation that is also hierarchical. The Russian model is the most capable of representing the post-capitalist model, not only because it is a prototype of all state socialist countries (to which model even Cuba is tending towards, after having explored original aspects of management in its first years of government), but also because it is sufficiently known and consolidated over half a century of existence. The economical and the political fusion identifies the social hierarchy in a state hierarchy. The abolition of privately owned means of production identifies the collective appropriation by the technocratic bureaucracy, which directs production for its own interests and it appropriates the surplus of social labour under a peculiar privileged form: not just as a highly retributed salary, but also as a set of privileged services, such as country homes, exclusive shopping, travel abroad, use of cars, differentiated higher income for their children, etc. Below the level of middle income of technicians and bureaucrats, there are the exploited working class of the cities and the country, the slaves of the modern State, deprived from even selling their labour force to the best offers as allowed in the capitalist economy, deprived of the right to strike for an improvement for their salaries and of their life condition. The major element of a post capitalist structure is planning which substitutes the demand-offer mechanism of the labour market.

In such a structure the political power (of the State) decides the effects to be pursued, depending upon the internal and external demands as required by the interests of the dominant class. Planning is what decides capital investment, production quality and quantity, prices and salaries. The money system has a different connotation than the one in the capitalist system of values. The enormous planning structure of the Soviet Union is now creating a kind of partial decentralization of the plan. A greater autonomy of the decentralized 'centres' is increasing the political power of such centres. *Nomenklatura* is the new class of managers and state officers. One million Russians are 'more equal than others', depending on their position in the hierarchy that screens the technocrats in power through education and promotion.

The political party does not manage (directly) production and distribution, but it exercises a control function and regulates all aspects of communal life, using the State ideology to formally legitimize the 'New Bosses' powers and privileges.

(translated by CEAC from 'Un programma Anarchico', by G.A.F. group, C.D.A. Editors, Turin, 1977).



photo: Marina Abramovic & Ulay



G. LANZI



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